

# SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LAW STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026





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# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DEAN

Welcome to the School of Business and Law!

I am delighted to present our Strategic Plan 2022–2026. This is the second strategic plan for the School in its current iteration.

We started 2022 extremely well achieving our first international accreditation with AACSB International, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. AACSB Accreditation is synonymous with the highest standards in business education and a priority objective from our previous plan. It confirms our status as a world-class business school with quality at the core of our practice.

The School has made phenomenal improvements in international rankings over the past five years. In the 2023 Times Higher Education World University Rankings by Subject we are ranked in the top 250 in the world for Business and Economics studies, while our Tourism and Hospitality Management programs are in the top 30 worldwide according to the ShanghaiRankings 2022. Both achievements rest largely on the amazing research produced in this School by our dedicated academic staff. In addition, in September 2022, we were named the Number One Business School in Australia for Quality by the Australian Financial Review's (AFR's) BOSS Magazine; a significant and milestone achievement by any measure.

The School continues to provide one of the best student experiences in Australia as befits an institution with a legacy for exceptional teaching and learning. Our dedicated team of academic and professional staff regularly go 'over and above' to ensure they deliver the best quality education to our students in a stimulating, inclusive and supportive environment. In the 2021 QILT (Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching) survey, ECU was rated the top public university in Australia for Undergraduate Overall Educational Experience, Skills Development and Learning Resources in Business and Management. ECU was also rated the top WA university for Undergraduate Skills Development and Student Support in Law and Paralegal Studies.

This strategic plan will guide our endeavours for the next five years, including the move to the landmark new ECU City campus in Yagan Square, Perth. We will expand our partnerships with industry and institutions globally, in order to increase opportunities for



students and staff and amplify impact in our areas of strength. We will re-energise our international networks and develop new relationships to foster greater collaborations for research, student mobility and societal impact. In a fast-evolving global economy I believe it is vital to remain relevant and innovative so we will develop new programs and delivery modes to respond to change, including executive education and short courses that bring industry and academia closer together. At the heart of our School are talented academic and professional staff. We will continue to nurture the positive, cohesive, high-performance culture of our School and support our dedicated staff to achieve their career aspirations.

I am proud to lead a School that is passionate about realising its mission. I am excited about the future and look forward to working alongside our industry and institutional partners, and our wonderful staff and students to see even more amazing results going forward!

### **Professor Maryam Omari**

Executive Dean, School of Business and Law

Our dedicated team of academic and professional staff regularly go 'over and above' to ensure they deliver the best quality education to our students.











# MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

I welcome the School of Business and Law 2022-2026 strategic plan.

The period between 2022-2026 will be a period of immense change and important achievement for ECU.

In 2025 we will see the School of Business and Law established into the new ECU City campus, however, until then, we remain focussed on being a multi-campus university for today and into the future and have much to achieve within the next five years.

We continue to be dedicated to the success of all our students and provide contemporary learning experiences and personalised support.

Our research will solve real-world problems and we will engage with industry partners and community stakeholders to ensure relevance and reach that contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of Australia and beyond.

These strategic commitments will help to define ECU's distinctive positioning as a progressive university with impact locally, nationally and globally.

At our heart we continue to operate in accordance with our legacy, proud to be named after Edith Cowan the first woman elected to an Australian Parliament. Edith believed that education was fundamental to tacking the social issues of the



ECU and the School of Business and Law continue with a focus on transforming lives through quality education and research and initiatives that make a positive contribution to society – to our communities, to industry and to the environment.

I look forward to seeing the achievements of the School, its staff and most importantly its students, over the period of this strategic plan.

**Professor Steve Chapman CBE** Vice-Chancellor

Our research will solve real-world problems.

# **ABOUT ECU**

Edith Cowan University (ECU) has a proud history of more than a century of service to education in Western Australia (WA). Originally founded as a teacher's college in 1902, it later amalgamated with several other teacher-training institutions to form the Western Australian College of Advanced Education in 1982 and was subsequently awarded university status in 1991.

In just over 30 years, ECU has grown into a quality university serving communities across Australia and internationally. ECU has an outstanding reputation for excellence in teaching and learning, a growing research profile and boasts state-of-the-art facilities. The University has two metropolitan campuses at Mount Lawley and Joondalup, both located in Perth, and the largest regional campus in WA at Bunbury, 200 km south of Perth, which predominately serves the South West region of WA. In 2021, across many fields of study, ECU had over 31,000 enrolled students with almost 20,000 at the undergraduate level, 8,000 at the postgraduate level, over 600 in doctoral degrees and the remainder in vocational training and university enabling courses.

# **OUR PURPOSE**

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

# **OUR VISION**

To lead the sector in educational experience, research with impact, and in positive contributions to industry and communities.

# **OUR COMMITMENTS**

To achieve our vision, ECU will:

- be dedicated to every student's success
- provide real-world research solutions
- create partnerships for economic and social well-being
- empower our staff to lead in a diverse and values-based organisation
- secure our future through innovation and leadership

# **ECU'S VALUES**

Students, staff and Council members will always conduct their study, work and service to the University in ways that embrace the following values:



#### INTEGDITY

we are ethical, honest and fair and demonstrate trust and personal responsibility



#### DESDECT

we treat everyone within our diverse community with dignity and respect



#### RATIONAL INQUIRY

our decision-making is driven by evidence, sound reasoning, and creative thinking



# PERSONAL EXCELLENCE

we demonstrate the highest personal and professional standards



#### COURAGE

we are bold and resolute in our thinking and actions in pursuit of our goals



# ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LAW

The School of Business and Law is currently based at the Joondalup campus and in 2022 employed approximately 90 academics and over 20 professional staff from a variety of backgrounds with more than 70% of staff born overseas.

There are approximately 3,700 enrolled students, including over 2,200 undergraduate and over 1,500 postgraduate students, studying on-campus and online. Over half of the full-time student load is international with students from more than 75 different countries. The School offers over 50 programs that are developed in consultation with industry groups and combine the latest theory with hands-on, practical experiences at the undergraduate, postgraduate and higher degree by research levels.

All coursework programs can be studied full-time and part-time and students have the option to study in face-to-face, hybrid and online modes.

The School is home to two research centres: the ECU (university level) Strategic Centre for Work and Wellbeing (CW+W) and the School based Centre for Tourism Research (CTR). Both have demonstrated impressive results in grant funding, quality publications and international rankings, respectively.



## **OUR MISSION**

The School of Business and Law develops industry-ready graduates through high-quality teaching and learning experiences and engaged, applied research.

The three key elements of the School's mission have been expanded as follows:

Industry Ready Graduates. The School proactively engages with industry for the benefit of the student experience and beyond. The School values academics with real world experience and promotes industry-centric teaching in curricula. With leading edge work integrated learning (WIL) expertise, the School develops authentic, knowledgeable graduates who are willing to learn, engage and contribute with their chosen industry and to society more broadly.

**High-quality teaching and learning experiences.** The School consistently provides excellent teaching and learning experiences for a diverse

student body, facilitated by enthusiastic and caring academics who genuinely place the student at the centre of their teaching practice. The School places special emphasis on providing learning environments and facilities that replicate contemporary business practice.

**Engaged, applied research.** The School produces research that matters to our stakeholders by academics who are sought out as experts and thought leaders. Academics work collaboratively with colleagues and industry to produce research that is translatable, impacting both scholarship and industry. Importantly, research informs teaching practice and curricula in the School.

In addition to the School's mission, the Law discipline has a further declaration:

As a provider of an accredited law program, the School is proud to express its commitment to the rule of law and the promotion of the highest standards of ethical conduct, professional responsibility, and community service.

This strategic plan will guide our endeavours for the next five years, including the move to the landmark new ECU City campus in Yagan Square, Perth.



# SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LAW STRATEGY

# PROCESS, STRUCTURE, OVERVIEW

The ECU Strategic Plan 2022-2026 provides the overall direction for the University to achieve its purpose and vision. The School shadows the strategic processes of the University, to ensure alignment with the direction of the wider institution and its reporting requirements and timelines.

The School's Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 is developed by the School Leadership Team (comprising members of the School Executive, the Directors, the professoriate and senior professional staff), with additional input provided by the School Advisory Board, staff, students and other stakeholders. Embedded within the School's Strategic Plan are the following University-wide supporting plans:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan;
- Educational Experience Plan;
- Enrolment Growth Plan;
- Equity and Inclusion Plan;
- International Plan; and
- Research Plan.

The annual Operational Plan is developed each year from the SBL Strategic Plan and informs the work plans for each work area in the School, with budgets aligned to ensure objectives can be met. The School conducts internal quarterly reviews to track progress against targets in the annual Operational Plan and a final report against KPIs is provided to the Vice-Chancellor at the end of each year. Performance reports on the School's progress and standing are provided to the University's Governing Council every three years. The multi-level reporting is also used to track progress against the School's Strategic Plan and forms part of the periodic review of the School's Mission, Objectives and Strategic Plan.



# SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LAW STRATEGIC GOALS

# GOAL 1:

# Delivering an exceptional student experience for success in work and life

ECU has an enviable reputation for its teaching quality and for sustained excellence in the student experience. The University will continue to deliver contemporary learning experiences and personalised support to provide agile responses to the changing needs and expectations of our students, graduates, industry and communities.

The School will maintain excellence in teaching and learning with an emphasis on quality assurance, student success and career outcomes for our unique and diverse student profile. We will also drive positive societal impact through curriculum development that fosters ethics, sustainability and responsibility.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Personalised learning and study support.
   ECU's delivery of inclusive learning, teaching and student services will be sector-leading and will drive improvement in retention and success. The School will:
  - normalise the use and impact of key student support services for all students by extending peer-led and peer endorsed programs that build students' sense of belonging across ECU's study location; and
  - enhance curricula, teaching quality and student experience showing increased retention and success for students in identified equity groups.

- 2. Quality and consistency across all modes and locations of study.
  - ECU will provide world-class, inclusive and engaging learning experiences of comparable quality in all physical and virtual spaces.

    The School will:
  - leverage data and analytics for continuous improvement in all locations and modes in the development of a new Assurance of Learning (AoL) system that tracks outcomes of individual students and cohorts.
  - regularly monitor student feedback, the quality of programs and their delivery.





# 3. Graduates empowered to succeed.

ECU will offer a comprehensive range of curricular and extracurricular activities to provide graduates with the skills and confidence they need, and to deliver a step change improvement in graduate employment outcomes. The School will:

- embed the ECU Employability framework across all curricula, delivering coordinated, targeted interventions across the student lifecycle for cohorts and courses with weak employment outcomes;
- systematically embed career development learning across all courses;
- raise visibility and awareness of co-curricular activities from first year; and
- expand, embed and scaffold work-integrated learning through industry and community partnership models.

# 4. Promoting equity, diversity and excellence.

ECU will provide sector leadership in contemporary equity, diversity and inclusive practices, to widen participation and success in higher education. The School will:

 expand service learning opportunities and develop curricula that promote social justice and positive social change.

# 5. Success for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students.

ECU will lead the sector in education that supports the success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The School will:

 continue to support the National Indigenous Business Summer School in WA and all University-wide initiatives.





# LIFE'S A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT FOR ETHAN

Ethan Culff is majoring in project management as part of his Commerce degree. Through the School's work integrated learning program, he was offered a paid internship with corporate giant IBM.

This exciting partnership between ECU and IBM will provide many more students like Ethan gain valuable experience before they graduate.

# GOAL 2:

# Undertaking impactful world-class research

As a young, modern university, ECU will continue to focus on the growth of its research capacity in distinctive research areas that provide innovative, real-world solutions of significance and benefit to society. We are committed to undertake research that is always world class, producing research outputs that have relevance and reach for our industry and community partners.

The School has been making a steady change to research that is even more recognised by academia and industry as being high quality and of value. As such, we will be open and responsive to new partners and opportunities locally, nationally and internationally. As a multi-disciplinary business school, we will nurture a research culture that extends across the disciplines to support all academics whilst recognising centres of excellence.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

#### 6. Focused, world-class research.

ECU's research will be focused in distinctive areas of nationally and internationally recognised excellence, aligned to ECU's course offerings and to the needs of industry and the community. The School will:

 increase the quality and volume of research recognised nationally and internationally for excellence by creating a support system aligned to the School's research clusters, field of research codes, and School strengths.

### 7. A strong research culture.

ECU's researchers will be supported to achieve world-class research with demonstrable impact, to further build a thriving research community with a strong culture of excellence. The School will:

- enhance research leadership and target staff recruitment towards major field of research codes and focus areas;
- support academic staff to grow their research profiles, international connections and outputs by implementing a research plan that builds research capabilities in early and mid-career researchers; and
- support quality outputs and recognition of successful grants through regular review and implementation of the School's workload model.



# 8. Highly valued higher degree by research graduates.

ECU will build its higher degree by research student program and industry-focused training, to support a strong and distinctive community of research students who will succeed in their research careers.

The School will:

- implement a research plan that provides increased levels of support and training to Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) students:
- increase the number of staff registered to supervise HDR students by embedding supervision training in management for performance discussions; and
- build quality research outputs from HDR students by incentivising PhD students to publish papers with supervisors.

#### 9. Partnerships for research.

ECU will develop sustained and purposeful partnerships with industry and communities to deliver research solutions with demonstrable impact and benefit to those stakeholders. The School will:

- develop significant research partnerships with industry that are multi-year and multi-faceted and lead to clear impact;
- foster researcher-led engagement with external partners through targeted industry-facing activities and events;
- translate high-quality School research into curriculum including executive education and short courses;
- develop case studies in areas of research strength to demonstrate high impact; and
- support and incentivise international research partnerships.



# THE ECU STRATEGIC CENTRE FOR WORK + WELLBEING

The Centre for Work + Wellbeing is housed in the School of Business and Law and comprises academics from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds with the goal of producing research that advances individual, organisational and community wellbeing.

The Centre's growing reputation has attracted external research funding and it has produced a number of industry resources to address issues such as psychosocial hazards in the workplace, healthy workplaces for older workers, and mental health and wellbeing for flexible work arrangements.



# GOAL 3:

# Leading the sector in internationalisation

In the years to 2020, ECU experienced strong demand from international students for its programs, and impressive growth in international enrolments from a diverse range of countries. ECU will offer high-quality global education and research opportunities that restore and grow international student enrolments and sustain productive relationships with overseas institutions, and with international education business and industry partners.

The School will rebuild its international student load with a focus on quality and diversification. We will improve the HDR experience for our international candidates. Key to our recovery is the development of new international partnerships with quality academic institutions and industry organisations for truly global educational experiences and innovative research collaborations.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### 10. International recovery and growth.

ECU will revitalise its offshore presence, market activity and representation to rebuild international onshore enrolments and international student fee income. The School will:

- recover and grow onshore international enrolments by prioritising recruitment activities in key offshore and diverse markets to attract new students;
- build resilient and sustainable operations in offshore markets by developing an offshore market strategy (in collaboration with the International Office) that diversifies the student base, prioritises products and countries and is consistent with ECU's revised international risk appetite framework; and
- build international student enrolments with quality and diversification by expanding pathway partner collaborations to develop new products, programs and articulation agreements.

### 11. Global relationships.

ECU will create and sustain productive global relationships with educational institutions and international organisations, based upon a cohesive strategy for international partnership selection, management, and performance. The School will:

• grow and sustain multi-faceted international partnerships with quality institutions.

### 12. Strengthening offshore delivery.

ECU will expand offshore delivery arrangements in Transnational Education in order to grow offshore student enrolments and income.

The School will:

 seek innovative international executive education activities to increase income and local institutional capacity building.



# 13. International partnerships for research students.

ECU will develop strategic partnerships with overseas universities, sponsoring bodies and global organisations, to attract and support high-performing international higher degree by research students in disciplines aligned to ECU's research priorities. The School will:

 enhance the international appeal of research degrees at SBL by providing Work Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities for HDR students.

#### 14. An internationalised student experience.

ECU will increase participation in inbound and outbound student mobility activities that provide international experiences and promote global citizenship. The School will:

- grow inbound study abroad activities to increase on-campus diversity by developing and promoting new market-competitive study abroad options, including cohort-based experiential and non-award programs;
- establish dual degrees and exchange arrangements with new and agreed growth targets; and
- Increase the number of SBL students participating in international experiences (including equity students), by identifying, developing and supporting new mobility opportunities with selected partners and expanding in curricula opportunities for collaborations.



# FRIENDSHIP KEEPING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TOGETHER

After a chance meeting in their first week at university, two international students have ridden the rollercoaster of COVID-19 and recently crossed the graduation stage as lifelong friends.

Maisha Zuhair, from the Maldives, and Andra Dinu, Romania, decided to remain in Australia when the international borders shut in early 2020 to continue their Master of Business Administration course.

"We have supported each other through every unit and life's ups and downs – which has only made our friendship stronger," Andra said.



# GOAL 4:

# Empowering the talent and potential of our staff

ECU has a strong and positive organisational culture with staff expressing high levels of satisfaction with ECU as an employer. ECU understands the importance of sustaining a culture of resilience, courage, innovation, and excellence so that our staff thrive and the goals of the University are supported. There will be increased support for staff to maximise their talent and potential, as individuals, as members of teams, and through their professional networks. With a focus on personal excellence and accountability, we will recognise and reward staff for their contributions to the success of the University.

The School has a distinctive and inclusive culture which can be characterised as being positive, collegial and agile with clear expectations for quality and performance. To sustain this competitive advantage, we will develop, support, celebrate and retain our diverse workforce to maximise potential and continuity. We will always recruit based on talent and fit with our culture.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

15. A workforce ready for the future.

ECU will adopt a strategic and proactive approach to workforce planning that enhances capabilities and ensures agility to meet future workforce needs. The School will:

- enhance its workforce through recruitment of high-performing staff that support the strategic direction of the School;
- implement mentoring and leadership development programs; and
- improve professional staff uptake of development opportunities.

16. Establish a contemporary approach to academic careers.

ECU will develop a contemporary academic careers framework that enables academic staff to deliver high-performance scholarly teaching, and research outcomes, and supports their career aspirations and the goals of the University. The School will:

- implement processes and programs that assist academic staff to realise their career aspirations; and
- establish transparent research workload principles including expectations for accreditation qualification status benchmarks and others as required.





#### 17. A workforce that reflects our communities.

ECU will extend its commitment to recruiting, supporting and retaining staff from diverse backgrounds, maintaining an inclusive working environment that demonstrates our contribution to addressing inequities of opportunity in the University sector and the wider community. The School will:

- grow our workforce to be representative of the diversity in our community by introducing innovative, intentional and targeted recruitment and employment strategies to attract and retain diverse talent; and
- · continue to celebrate diversity.

#### 18. Transformation, resilience and excellence.

ECU will build the leadership capability needed to support change, new ways of working, and effective responses to disruption, while promoting an inclusive high-performance culture, where all staff are able to achieve excellence in their disciplines, professions and careers. The School will:

 ensure continuity of leadership capabilities by continuing to develop succession plans for the all key academic and professional leadership roles in the School.







# **NATIONALLY RECOGNISED TALENT**

Dr Claire Lambert is one the School's most awarded academics including a Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning in the 2021 Australian Awards for University Teaching (AAUT).

Encouraging mentors, generous parental leave and support from colleagues across the University have contributed to her career success.

# GOAL 5:

# Securing our future

ECU recognises that the viability and sustainability of a university relies upon its continuing relevance to its students and stakeholders. ECU will redefine its operating model to effect ECU-wide transformation of the student experience and research collaboration, driving industry partnership and community engagement. By adopting and adapting innovative approaches to learning delivery, using contemporary technologies and facilities at all its campuses, ECU will contribute both to its own sustainability and to improved outcomes for our communities.

For the School of Business and Law, the move to ECU City is central to realising its ambitions for growth and the establishment of new multi-faceted partners in the Perth CBD. We are excited by the opportunity to develop innovative curricula that will be attractive to a new generation of changemakers for positive societal impact.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### 19. Towards the University of the Future.

The ECU City project will build a world-class Creative Industries, Business and Technology precinct in the Perth CBD, and act as the catalyst to transform all our campuses into always on, year-round, and vibrant learning and working spaces, utilising next-generation technologies that promote industry partnership and community engagement beyond our physical footprint. The School will:

 position ECU City as a key site for professional learning and industry engagement by implementing a roadmap for community, industry and professional engagement in the Perth CBD.

#### 20. Course renewal and rationalisation.

ECU's course offerings will be aligned to an agreed profile that accords with our research strengths and anticipates emerging student needs, current and future labour market and workforce needs, in order to deliver sustainable levels of student demand and to optimise funding. The School will develop new courses and programs under an over-arching enrolment strategy as follows:

- develop interdisciplinary course offerings for delivery at ECU City;
- implement new executive education programs for and at ECU City;
- develop and implement new nested course options and micro-credentials; and
- offer new accelerated learning options.





## 21. Strong Regional Communities.

ECU will drive improved outcomes for regional communities in Western Australia, through enhanced education and research opportunities at ECU South West and its study hubs, and through capacity building in the South West Region. The School will:

 maintain existing teaching, research and executive education activities while supporting broader University initiatives.

## 22. Social change imperatives.

ECU will effect social change by engaging with communities for its education and research activities, and environmental sustainability will be considered in all University activities and operations. The School will:

- prioritise and undertake relevant initiatives and actions to influence student attitudes towards sustainability, equity, diversity and inclusion; and
- strengthen relationships with priority schools and organisations that foster and promote access to higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

## 23. Financial sustainability.

ECU will maintain a strong financial base, through a range of approaches to revenue diversification, improved productivity, and efficiency gains and through a program for philanthropic support with industry partners and alumni. The School will:

 grow enrolments in alignment with ECU growth KPIs by developing new products and improving recruitment strategies.

#### 24. International Accreditations.

The School will maintain and grow international accreditations to drive quality improvements that are benchmarked globally.



# ENACTUS ECU: CREATING A BETTER WORLD

ENACTUS ECU is a student group that develops community-based projects with positive economic, social and environmental impact. It is part of a world-wide movement that encourages entrepreneurial action for a better world.

The Sustainability Festival is an annual event created and run by ECU Enactus with the aim to raise awareness of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and to promote more sustainable practices. This festive community event was commended by a panel of national and international deans as part of AACSB Accreditation. The School is a proud and active supporter of Enactus ECU.

# Contact

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## Find us at





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ECU is committed to reconciliation and recognises and respects the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' communities, cultures and histories. ECU acknowledges and respects the Noongar people as the traditional custodians of the land on which our campuses are located.

## www.ecu.edu.au/about-ecu/indigenous-matters

Information contained in this brochure was correct at the time of publication and may be subject to change.