



# Sustainability at ECU

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## Sustainability at ECU

Sustainability is key element of how ECU conducts all aspects of its business. There is a high degree of focus throughout the campus community on developing and implementing strategies which improve the University's overall environmental footprint.

The following paper provides an overview of ECU's strategic approach to sustainability along with examples of enduring programs which put the broader vision into very day practice. Whilst there is a good deal of empirical data to support ECU's environmental credentials, the University remains vigilant of the need to continue to drive for continued improvement. To this end the paper, will also outline our future plans for new initiatives.

#### **ECU Strategic Plan**

One of ECU's strategic goals is to ensure organisational sustainability with infrastructure that supports our broader objectives. In this regard, one of ECU's goals is to reduce its carbon footprint through actions that include decreasing waste to landfill, water usage and energy consumption. We also seek to align the University's goals with Government policy targets.

#### **Sustainability Policy**

ECU's approach to sustainability is further formalised by the existence of the Sustainability Policy. The policy references the main principles which underpin the policy along with the organisation's data collection and reporting commitments. The policy can be found at

http://policysearch.ecu.edu.au/WebDrawer.PolicySearch/Record?q=recAnyWord%3Asustainability&sortBy=

#### **Environmental Certification**

The Facilities and Services Centre at ECU is certified to ISO14001, Environmental Management Systems:

#### Figure 1:

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It operates the following environmental programs:

- Waste Environmental Improvement Program
- Water Environmental Improvement Program
- Energy Environmental Improvement Program

A Manager is assigned responsibility for each program and a group meets regularly to drive continuous improvement in each area.

#### **Reducing our Carbon Footprint**

ECU has been measuring its Carbon Footprint since 2008, see chart below, and conducts an annual carbon survey.



The reduction in carbon (Scope 1 and Scope 2 in National Greenhouse Energy Reporting) of over 41% is a result of ECU demolishing old inefficient buildings on the previous Churchlands Campus and replacing these with modern

and energy efficient buildings on the Joondalup and Mount Lawley campuses.

**Energy Consumption** 

ECU is amongst the most efficient consumers of energy in the Australian University Sector. Only four other institutions reported better performance levels in the 2018 TEFMA Benchmarking report. ECU's combination of efficient buildings coupled with advanced BMS technology helps to drive this level of sustained performance.



#### Figure 3

#### **Waste Output**

Over the last ten years ECU has been at the forefront of a mission within the wider community to improve its levels of divergence of waste to landfill. ECU has implemented a number of key strategies in that time including (a) installation of uniform recycling bins within buildings and across the campuses, (b) increased waste recovery streams including Organic, Hazardous, oils, Batteries Green and Electronic Waste, (c) creating of a waste recycling station and (d) partnering with progressive commercial organisation who have invested heavily in technologies such as Cleanaway who commissioned Australia's largest Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in 2018.

The below listed chart is an extract from ECU's monthly waste report. The data reveals that divergence rate of 51% across all campuses for the 9 months to September 2019. It is also important to note that the University now has 14 separate recycling streams.

#### Figure 4



Weight collected by Waste stream

Figure 5 is an extract from the 2018 TEFMA benchmarking survey. This chart measures ECU's scope 1&2 emissions outputs as function of combined EFTSL and FTE populations and contrasts performance levels against other WA Universities and the Australian University as a whole. ECU's output levels are 30% lower than the sector average and a more detailed review of the granular data reveals that only 3 other Universities returned better results in 2018.





In addition, ECU offset 91 tonnes of carbon emissions in 2018 through the surrender of Biodiverse Reforestation Carbon Offsets in the Yarra Yarra Biodiversity Corridor *Figure 6* 



#### **Targeted Reductions in Plastics from ECU Campuses**

In 2018, ECU's Vice-Chancellor announced that ECU was restricting the use of single use bottled water from its campuses. By the commencement of Quarter 2, 2019, this initiative was fully operational via the launch of three separate strategies:

- 1. Through consultation with café and vending operators, plastic water bottles were removed from sale across the three campuses. Plastic bottles were replaced with glass and biodegradable cardboard cartons.
- 2. Installation and upgrade of 30 filtered water refilling stations across all campuses.
- 3. The provision of free reusable water bottles at ECU events such as orientation and the sale of subsidised reusable PBA free bottles at most cafes.

Each of the refill stations is equipped with flow meters, and based on data collected at the end of September, it is estimated that 215,000 375ml bottles will have been removed from the environment in during the 5 months this initiative has been running. Based on current volumes it is estimated that the ongoing reduction level will be in the order of 400, 000 bottles per annum.

In a further effort to combat the level of plastic being consumed, all Café outlets have made significant progress in moving towards biodegradable packaging, plates cutlery and straws etc. These same sustainable practices are also incorporated in all ECU corporate events.

#### **Down Stream Waste Management**

Whilst ECU actively drives initiatives to reduce our environmental footprint, we have also been proactive in engaging with our recycling partners do determine where recycled material ends up after it leaves our campuses. Figure 7 provides a snapshot of where how recyclable materials are used when they leave the Cleanaway MRF.

#### Figure 7



#### Transport

ECU provides students and staff with transport options for University or course-related business.

Pool vehicles are available, with all fleet carbon emissions being offset. In addition, ECU makes available and strongly encourages the use of Smartrider cards as an alternative inter-campus travel option.

In line with the University commitment to reduce our environmental impact, ECU fleet runs hybrid, smaller and more fuel efficient vehicles including a fully electric Nissan Leaf.

The Carbon Neutral Report released in February 2019 for the period January - December 2018 show the emissions from the direct burning of fuel in fleet vehicles reduced from 197.08 t CO2-e in 2008 to 88.88 t CO2-e in 2018 (-55%).

Public transport is a quick and convenient option for travelling to the University. TransPerth run a free CAT bus service from ECU Joondalup campus to the Joondalup railway station. ECU makes a financial contribution towards this service.

#### Figure 8 Joondalup CAT Bus Routes



#### Urbi Bikes

Urbi is a bike sharing service with stations located on the Joondalup Campus and around the Joondalup CBD. *Figure 9* 



#### Student Car Share

Car Share is a convenient and simple car hire system targeted at students. It operates from central pick-up, drop-off locations. The vehicles are available to use within a 300km radius when not booked, students just select the required time block and lock it in. It is a great asset to utilise in a situation where students need a vehicle short-term, saving them the hassle of per-day rental, worrying about their own transport and even parking on a regular basis where that is difficult.

#### **Live Environmental Data**

ECU uses an online tool <u>Greensense View</u> to monitor water, energy usage and water consumption. This environmental data monitoring system is updated every three minutes to enable ECU to review live data which assists to:

- produce efficient environmental reports to support our Environmental Management System;
- educate and inform staff and students of environmental impacts; and
- save money.

#### **Sustainable Building Design**

The ECU Planning and Design Guidelines provides guidance to designers in respect to Ecological Sustainable Design ("ESD"). ESD means to design buildings with longevity and minimal impact on the existing biodiversity and there are three key ways to achieve this:

- Compliance with the six environmental performance indicators
- Incorporating Green Star building design features to a minimum standard of 4 stars with the target of reaching 5 stars. Please note ECU does not apply for Green Star accreditation certificates but does aim to incorporate green star design features into its building design.
- Meeting the requirements for design documentation and review according to the process

This document provides a step-by-step guide which will allow the design to be reviewed prior to proceeding to the next stage of design development. However this section is not a complete guide to the sustainable features to be included in building design and for a complete understanding of sustainable building features this section must be read in conjunction with other sections of the Guidelines.

This document is a guide to the various green building approaches and technologies available to designers. There are many guidelines and case studies, and much literature on this subject, and designers are expected to be aware of best practice and able to apply it to ECU projects.

#### Benchmarking

ECU participates in the annual Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association (TEFMA) benchmarking exercise where the University compares its services, processes and outcomes to other Australian universities. The benchmarking exercise considers the following 12 factors:

- 1. Are facilities efficiently designed UFA/GFA (Useable Floor Area/Gross Floor Area)?
- 2. Do facilities meet demand GFA/EFTSL (Gross Floor Area/Equivalent Full Time Student Load)?
- 3. Are campuses secure Total security costs per EFTSL and GFA?
- 4. Are campuses clean Total cleaning cost per GFA?
- 5. Is there minimal waste sent to landfill waste per EFTSL, FTE and recyclables?
- 6. Carbon emissions per GFA?
- 7. Do the campuses use minimal energy cost per GFA and consumption per GFA?
- 8. Maintenance cost as a % of asset replacement value and cost per GFA?
- 9. Building Operating costs per GFA?
- 10. Do the campuses use minimal water Water cost per GFA, consumption per EFTSL and consumption per hectare?
- 11. Are facilities well maintained cost of backlog maintenance?
- 12. Are campus grounds well maintained Cost of grounds/ha?

ECU is a sector leader in terms of carbon emissions, energy cost/consumption and waste output.

#### **Printing and Copying**

ECU has embedded enhanced printing and copying technologies across all campuses. Figures 10 & 11 outline the benefits of this new technology and highlight the operational and environmental gains that have been delivered. It isn't possible to accurately quantify what copying / print volume savings have been achieved as we didn't have good base line data at the commencement of the project. The printer / copier fleet has been reduced by 35% (120 devices) and the model count streamlined from 96 models to 5. Inbuilt capabilities such as B&W default settings, follow me print, and automatic print cancelling after 12 hours have reduced the environmental impact of excess print practices.





The Paper-Cut technology within the print environment automatically cancels redundant jobs, which remain unprinted after 12 hours. This technology has saved over 1.7 million sheets of paper in the last 12 months and delivering a saving of \$320K. We will shortly reduce that cancellation window from 12 to 4 hours.





#### **Food Recovery Networks**

Several of ECU's café operators are actively engaged in contributing to food recovery / redistribution programs. The operators of Café 6, Cafe23 and Café 10 have been collaborating with Ozharvest for several years, by donating excess food. Another exciting tri-party trial is currently underway on the Joondalup campus. ECU researcher Therese O'Sullivan is presently trialling an app which will in time connect food outlets with shelters and other community groups. Bermuda café and the ECU Student Guild are presently assisting the *Refood* trial in a test environment within the University.

Figure 11: Bermuda Café makes the first food donation to the Student Guild in the Refood trial.



#### **Radiation, Biosafety and Hazardous Substances**

ECU has established a committee that provides advice and assistance to the University on applying legislation, policy and guidelines that govern radiation, biosafety and hazardous substances. The Radiation, Biosafety and Hazardous Substances Committee (RBHSC) is inclusive of the Institutional Biosafety Committee requirement.

The committee is made up of representatives from Schools and Service Centre's including specialists from a variety of disciplines such as occupational health and safety and external persons.

The process of disposing of hazardous waste has recently been transferred to FSC and will be managed under the central ISS waste contract. This will ensure a more consistent approach to the treatment of this type of waste.

#### ChemAlert

The <u>ChemAlert system</u> is used to assist ECU in managing chemicals including hazardous substances in the workplace. For Schools/Service Centres with hazardous substances ChemAlert Administrators are available to assist with queries.

#### **School of Engineering**

The School of Engineering contributes to ECUs overall sustainability agenda through (1) its teaching programs, (2) research activities and (3) implementation of new technologies into the work place.

- 1. The Engineering curriculum has three programs with a high degree of focus on sustainability:
  - i. Bachelor of Engineering (Civil and Environmental) Honours
  - ii. Bachelor of Engineering (Electrical & Renewable Energy) Honours
  - iii. Master of Engineering (Electrical & Renewable Energy)
- 2. There are a significant number of research activities underway within the school with a significant emphasis on sustainability. Examples include:
  - i. Renewable energy and smart energy systems
  - ii. Environmental monitoring technologies
  - iii. Water and wastewater management
  - iv. Recycling waste as building materials and for the enhancement of foundations
  - v. Environmental catalysis for clean production of hydrogen and hydrocarbons
  - vi. Materials and processes for energy efficient reverse osmosis

Figure 12 : Research Assistant Amro Qandauo, displays a piece of surveillance technology, which is assisting Water Corp. to detect unauthorised access to water catchment facilities in WA. Maintaining secure and contaminant free water supply is a significant contribution by ECU to the broader environment and WA communities.



Figure 13 depicts Associate Dean (Research) Mehdi Haji Khiadani with a porotype piece of equipment developed by ECU researchers, which uses low grade waste heat to convert contaminated water in to clean filtered water.

## Figure 13: Another example of ECU developed technology which has the potential to generate significant environmental gains.



3. The built environment within the Engineering Precinct provides a working platform for students to experiment with new technologies in a real life context. Smart energy labs in B27A allow students to work with a variety of energy sources and energy storage devices to power the building, while variable Building Management Systems (BMS) enable Engineering staff and students to set the parameters in B27 to achieve different performance outcomes.

Figure 14: Remote Building Management Systems provide real time energy consumption data

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| Laboratory                 | Zone<br>Temp | Cooling<br>Power | Heating<br>Power    | Lighting<br>Power | Essential<br>Power    | NonEssen.<br>Power      | Lab Total<br>Power |                         |        |
| (1) Maritime Eng [L1]      | 19.44        | 20.2             | 0                   | 0.335             | 0                     | 0.059                   | 20.996             |                         |        |
| (2) Environmental Eng [L1] | 17.61        | 14.8             | 0                   | 0.034             | 0.013                 | 0.166                   | 15.21              | 1 1 1 1                 | s ??,  |
| (3) Petroleum Eng 2 [L2]   | 19.43        | 0                | 0                   | 0.043             | 0.016                 | 0.098                   | 0.159              | 1. 1. 5. 3/1            | 1      |
| (d) Petroleum Eng 1 [12]   | 19.47        | 9.1              | 0                   | 0.674             | -0.007                | 0                       | 9.766              | 1 1 1                   | 3      |
| (a) Meteololo Food (12)    | 19.49        | 6.6              | 0                   | 0.047             | 1                     | 0.066                   | 7.612              | TY T                    |        |
| (5) Materials Eng (C2)     | 18 31        | 15.6             | 0                   | 1.712             | 0                     | 0.292                   | 17                 | 34.72 12.13 12.13 12.23 |        |
| (b) Petroteum city s tess  | 20.15        | 0.1              | 0                   | 0.044             | 0.01                  | 0                       | 0.355              |                         |        |
| (7) Chemical Eng [13]      |              |                  |                     |                   | 1.03                  | 0.68                    |                    |                         |        |

#### School of Business and Law

The School of Business and Law (SBL) became an Advanced Signatory to the *Principles for Responsible Management Education* (PRME) in 2019. Founded by the former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in 2007, PRME is essentially a movement by leading business schools worldwide to implement the six <u>PRME principles</u> as a mechanism to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The six principles of PRME are designed to educate students on the importance of becoming responsible leaders who have a sense of accountability to others and are capable of balancing the demands of business with economic, social and environmental sustainability. School of Business and Law ensures achieving this through embedding the principles of sustainability, ethics and responsible management across the School's curriculum and courses, research, and operations.





In addition to the explicit commitment to sustainability by SBL leadership, School of Business and Law has used a bottom-up process for integrating sustainability and ethics in its teaching and learning, research and operations through forming a PRME and Sustainability working group. The team is led by Dr. Mehran Nejati (appointed as the Director of PRME and Sustainability at SBL) and has representatives from various stakeholders and disciplines including students and professional staff.

The following shows a selection of teaching, research, and operation-related activities at the School of Business and Law in support of sustainability and SDGs:

Guest Lecture on social inclusion and diversity, role in creating and their sustainable organisations: The lecture was presented by Paul Fleay (Chief Executive Officer of Australian Inclusion Group) and included examples of what doesn't in works and what practicing inclusiveness and diversity.

Category: Teaching & Leaning

#### Supported SDGs:



**Urban Pantry Initiative:** 

Urban Pantries (or Street/Free Food Pantries) are small and open structures, filled with donated food and other household items, and are designed to assist those in need within the neighbourhood. The concept behind these pantries are "take what you need, give what you can" - allowing those with a need to give to be able to donate and those with a need for food, to be able to be food secure. A donation box has been located in the SBL staffroom and staff are encouraged to contribute to this good cause.

Category: Operations

Supported SDGs:



Figure 16: Paul Fleay (CEO of presenting to students on social inclusion and diversity



Figure 17: Items donated by SBL staff to Urban Pantry in October 2019



#### **GIVE Initiative:**

In collaboration with SCR Group, SBL started this initiative to encourage staff to give their unwanted items to people across the world who need them. The Give Initiative aims to promote more responsible consumerism and avoid having unwanted items end up in landfills.

Category: Operations

#### Supported SDGs:



Figure 18: Best Paper Award by Associate Professor Hadrian Geri Djajadikerta and Dr Tricia Ong at the 2019 Accounting & Finance Association of Australia and New Zealand (AFAANZ) Conference for their paper on "Impact of Company Size and Financial Performance on CSR Disclosure and Performance: Using an Enhanced GRI-based Measuring Tool"

#### Category: Research Supported SDGs:



Women in Technology WA Tech [+] 20 Award Winner 2019: Dr Helen Cripps from the School of Business and Law was awarded by the Women in Technology WA Inc. (WiTWA) for being a role model in technology and diversity.

Category: Research / Teaching & Learning

#### Supported SDGs:





Figure 19



Figure 20: Dr. Mehran Nejati (Director of PRME and Sustainability at the ECU School of Business and Law) with students from the Managing for Sustainability Unit who recently took part in the ACT4SDGs global challenge to identify ways in which their University could further reduce its carbon footprint.



## **Future Sustainability Initiatives at ECU**

#### **Printing and Copying**

- 1. Fuji Xerox will soon install *Pop-up Warnings* when users attempt to print a document >100 pages. The warning will alert users to the cost of printing the material and question whether they really need a hard copy.
- 2. The time frame in which jobs will automatically be cancelled, will soon be reduced from 12 hours to 4 in order to further save on redundant printing.

#### Waste Management

- 1. A funding application has been lodged with the Department of Water and Environment in support of the following three initiatives:
  - a. Creation of a Waste Compound similar to the existing Joondalup campus facility at the ML Campus
  - b. Establishment of a GG-100H SoilFoodTM system (gas) to transform food, compostable bags, biopak products and garden waste generated by onsite cafes, tenancies and gardeners into an organic fertiliser for use on ECU campus grounds.
  - c. Development a comprehensive waste education strategy that supports ECU's waste infrastructure and provides a consistent and coordinated approach to waste and resource recovery education. It will inform our community of the waste hierarchy and provide practical steps to reduce waste output and to minimize ECU's environmental impact.
- 2. ECU is actively engaged in a market assessment to identify suitable organizations with sufficiently developed organic waste processing capability to allow ECU to further expand its food waste program. At present only food waste from kitchens gets captured in this organic waste stream. The intention is to install organic bins front of house in cafes to capture food scraps and bio-degradable packaging. Our initial market scan reveals that whilst there are a good number of operators in the market, there is no clear technological leader with the capacity to manage significant volumes of biodegradable packaging at this time.

#### Using ECU's IP to Advance the Campus Environment

ECU has developed some exciting technologies within its Schools. There is potential to expand the application of some of this IP within ECU's campuses. Closer collaboration between ITSC, FSC and Schools such as SSCI, SBL and SENG may give rise to a more holistic approach to ECU's sustainability objectives. There appears to be a strong desire amongst the ECU community to establish a framework, which would enable the Schools to weave some University wide sustainability initiatives into the curriculum. In doing so, the University may be in a position to leverage off some relatively inexpensive research output.

#### **Energy Technology**

ECU has, in recent years invested considerable amounts of resources into exploring the feasibility of establishing alternate sources of energy to power its campuses. A project to establish District Energy Scheme to supply 70% of the Joondalup campus's base load power was thoroughly explored in 2016. A similar project to establish a solar array on the Bunbury campus was also undertaken; however, neither project came to fruition due principally to an inability to reach agreement on commercial terms with prospective partners. Whilst these two projects failed to materialize, the University will continue to seek out and assess alternate sustainable energy options.

#### **Active Transport and Parking Strategies**

ECU will continue to explore initiatives which will encourage students and staff who drive a vehicle to campus to seek more sustainable modes of transport. FSC has had preliminary discussions with ride share and carpooling technology providers about how these services could be introduces in a practical manner across the University. Any meaningful gains in this space will in reality need to form part of a broader parking strategy.

### **Lighting Upgrades**

Exterior lights throughout the campuses are progressively being upgraded to LED technology. LED lights are typically 50% more efficient than incandescent lights and have a life span 3 times longer than existing technologies.

#### **Strategic Procurement**

ECU's procurement guidelines (sustainable procurement guideline) provides a framework for the sourcing of products which are environmentally friendly and have been procured from supply chains with responsible / ethical sourcing arrangements. The guidelines spell out clear strategies for sourcing products with high levels of recycling content and guard against products with toxicity risks. Sustainability also forms part of the selection criteria the appointment of key suppliers. The targeted development of sustainability KPIs in the near future will further help to provide a level of rigor around supply contracts. It should also be noted that ECU has also taken the <u>GECA positive procurement pledge</u> to ensure that the University is compliant with the ISO 20400 International Standard for Sustainable Procurement.

#### **Promoting ECU's Sustainability Achievements**

This paper has highlighted much of the excellent work which ECU is doing to reduce its carbon footprint and to drive a range of sustainability initiatives across its campuses. We know from the 2017 SSAFE Survey that students want to be part of an institution which has strong environmental credentials. One of the issues which has become quite prominent whilst preparing this paper is that many students and staff have no real sense of what is happening on the sustainability front outside of their immediate work environment. ECU would benefit from a better mechanism for reporting its achievements to the broader University community on a regular basis.