Summary of Results from the 2013 Student Services and Facilities Evaluation (SSAFE) Survey

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Student Services and Facilities Feedback Evaluation (SSAFE) Survey is conducted biennially. It measures student satisfaction with their experience at ECU, with a particular focus on services, facilities and campus life. A similar instrument was used in 2009 and 2011, allowing analysis of ratings over time. Student satisfaction with ECU’s services and facilities remains high (mean scores to global satisfaction close to or above 50), with 2013 survey results largely unchanged from 2011. While there are many positive results, the survey results also identify areas for improvement. Actions are being taken to respond to these.

The survey was conducted in Semester 2, 2013 and included a random sample of 60% of all current ECU students.

Services for Students – Results improved between 2011 and 2013 on most items in this section of the survey. The areas showing high increases in student satisfaction were the submission and processing of applications and accepting offers online. Increases in satisfaction were noted for initiatives such as projects to improve orientation services, and the online acceptance process. Academic appeals attracted the lowest level of student satisfaction with a mean of 24 which has remained largely unchanged over the time series. This may relate to students being dissatisfied with the outcomes of academic appeals rather than the process. Mean Satisfaction with equity and disability services increased by 5, but an overall rating of 34 suggests that there is further room for improvement.

Communications – Survey results for items relating to communications remained largely unchanged. The area with the lowest satisfaction rating was the student e-newsletter. The Marketing and Communications Services Centre (MCSC) undertook two reviews of the student e-newsletter resulting in changes in the frequency of distribution from fortnightly to monthly during semester time; a major redesign of the newsletter and a change of name to ‘things to know’. Recent analysis of newsletter usage has shown an increase in openings from 16% in March 2013 to 28% in March 2014. These statistics will be kept under review.

IT Services – Compared to results in 2011, students were more satisfied with the level of computer support; out-of hours help; standards of service from staff; availability of computers on campus; reliability of computers; and availability of printing facilities. High levels of dissatisfaction with the wireless network (mean = 26) was expected and is recognised as an area requiring improvement.

Library and Information Services – Satisfaction with Library and Information Services has generally improved, with the greatest increase in student satisfaction being the availability of study places. Satisfaction in this area has increased over the time series. A small increase in satisfaction with library opening hours during the week and on weekends is noted. Qualitative data records demand for longer library opening hours on weekdays and weekends across campuses. A review of ECU’s Library opening hours is scheduled for September 2014.

Faculties/Schools – Satisfaction with assistance from faculty/school staff increased marginally and the result (mean = 55) returned to 2009 levels. Ratings for satisfaction with the advice from Student Information Offices provided during visits to campus; on the phone; by email; and for its accuracy, achieved the same slightly increased rating across all four areas (mean of 47). Decreases in satisfaction levels from 2011 to 2013 by Off-Campus/External students are noted across all 6 items in the survey.
International Student Services – International student satisfaction levels increased to varying degrees across most areas of service addressed in the 2013 survey. The mean scores for all survey questions in 2013 range from 40 to 47 suggesting there is scope for further improvement in some areas to achieve more positive results. In 2013, ECU undertook a program of review and structural reform to improve its student operations capability with some former ECUI functions being assigned to the Student Services Centre (SSC) and Centre and MCSC. This is consistent with the “One University” philosophy. The impact of these arrangements may be revealed in the next SSAFE survey in 2015, or in the 2014 International Student Barometer.

Facilities – Items scoring moderately well (with a mean above 45) included satisfaction with the safety, out-of-hours services for security, maintenance of the grounds and landscaped areas, recycling facilities, maintenance of the buildings, study places on campus, and the generic question relating to ECU providing an enriching campus life for students. However, dissatisfaction was expressed by students with parking, food outlets, taverns, and childcare services. The Facilities and Services Centre (FSC) continues to work on strategies to improve parking, child-care, food outlets, the taverns, as well as sport and recreation.

2. OVERALL RESULTS – SNAPSHOT

Overall Experience

The ‘Overall Experience’ items, in particular the first three questions, are intended to give an overall rating of a student’s experience at ECU.

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with my experiences as a student at ECU.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>6620</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would recommend ECU to others.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>6631</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would recommend my current course of study to others.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>6612</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel part of a group of students and staff committed to learning.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6554</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel that I am part of the ECU community.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6510</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am satisfied that ECU operates in an environmentally sustainable manner.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6476</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the services and facilities at ECU.</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>6554</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
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Key Points

- The results for overall satisfaction remain largely unchanged from 2011 with mean scores of 48 to 60 and above, indicating an overall high level of satisfaction.
- Recommending ECU or their current course by students to others resulted in a mean of 60 for both items which translates to overall agreement by 87% of survey respondents.
- The question relating to the community aspect of ECU has consistently been rated poorly over the time series (mean = 27). Bunbury students rated this item higher (mean = 37) than students at...
Joondalup (mean = 28) and Mount Lawley (mean = 30). Overall agreement on this item was indicated by 53% of survey respondents.

- Overall satisfaction with ECU’s services and facilities has marginally increased to a mean of 48 with three in four students overall agreeing with this statement indicating a positive outcome.

### 3. COMPLETED/PLANNED IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

Consultation with relevant stakeholders focused on areas where the mean results showed a +5 or -5 change compared with the previous survey. Where student satisfaction had declined, discussions concentrated on what improvement actions were required. A summary of completed/planned improvement actions is shown below.

**Facilities and Services**

- Improvements to housing services include the provision of an additional 357 beds at the ECU Village at Mount Lawley Campus and planned build of 127 beds at Joondalup to open in 2015.
- In January 2014, all the aging treadmills, bikes and cross trainers were replaced in the Mount Lawley Gym. It is the University’s intention to replace the remaining pin loaded equipment before the end of the year.
- FSC are responding to the student feedback by implementing a number of initiatives to raise awareness of Security Services e.g.:
  - Bus stop stickers and large security banners and highlighting the security contact number are currently being produced. The banners will be used on orientation days and for display in the eLab to raise awareness of security services available and contact details;
  - The Student Guild is distributing 2000 ‘Campus Watch Flyers’ in their Orientation Day Giveaway Bags; and
  - The Security Services presentation used at the commencement of student lectures to promote security services and contact number is being up dated for reissue to all Heads of School for distribution.

**Services for Students**

- In 2013, ECU undertook a program of review and structural reform to improve its international student operations capability. From October 2013, admissions processing and the few services for International students not already in the remit of SSC are now delivered from SSC. SSC has mapped the admissions processes for International students and is implementing a number of improvements and has planned system enhancements. The impact of these new arrangements will be monitored and reviewed as part of SSC’s routine monitoring arrangements such as the Centre’s Annual Review and various student surveys.
- Improvements to ECU’s advanced standing arrangements have been a high priority for 2013. A new advanced standing database was developed that should improve the availability of advanced standing information for students. The database went live in December 2013 and increased student satisfaction levels are anticipated for this item in the next SSAFE survey.
- Reviewing and implementing changes to the Study Abroad/Student Exchange processes is a high priority action in the current (2014) Operational Plan for SSC as a result of assuming responsibility for this in 2014 following the operational changes to arrangements for International students. The review is scheduled to take place at the completion of Semester 1, 2014 with process changes being trialled in Semester 2.

**Information Technology Services**

- ECU has completed the migration of Windows 7 for staff and students across the University.
• Qualitative student comments relating to inconsistent customer service have been incorporated into professional development sessions for ITSC staff to improve the quality and consistency of customer service.

• The timeframe for completing wireless network improvements, which will increase wireless capacity fivefold, is by Semester 1, 2015.

**Library and Information Services**

• After completion of an extensive refurbishment program, Level 1 of the Joondalup Library was reopened early in 2014 and now provides a more contemporary and flexible social learning space for students.

• A system of ‘roving support’ for students by Library staff has been introduced to improve the accessibility, availability and timeliness of on the spot library support services.

• A review of ECU’s Library opening hours is scheduled for September 2014.
APPENDIX 1

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The 2013 SSAFE survey was conducted in Semester 2, 2013. There were 3,240 usable responses to the survey, with a response rate of 25%. As with the 2011 SSAFE, the 2013 survey targeted a random sample of 60% of all current ECU students. The remaining 40% of students were allocated to participate in the Insync Student Support Benchmark Survey and IT Benchmark Survey, which took place at the same time.

The survey instrument comprised 130 items arranged by theme. One or more open-ended questions were typically asked in each section of the questionnaire to provide qualitative data.

The themes explored were:

- Overall experience
- Course selection and application
- Enrolling
- Orientation
- Communications and feedback
- External students
- Student Services - advice
- Student Services - fees
- Student Services - welfare
- Student Services - other
- SIMO
- Website
- IT Services
- Library
- Faculties/schools
- International
- Ethics and equity
- After graduation
- Campus access
- Housing
- Security
- Campus life

For all questions, response values were based on a 5-point Likert agreement scale with an option to select ‘not applicable’. Instructions to students included advice to use “Not Applicable” rather than “Neutral” if they had not used/experienced a particular service, or could not make a judgement.

Mean scores are averages, calculated after recoding the student responses strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree to -100, -50, 0, 50, and 100 respectively.

Interpreting Results

As a guide, a score of around 30 or less suggests room for improvement, with typically less than 2 in 3 students showing satisfaction with the item. A mean score of 55 is more positive, with approximately 4 in 5 students showing satisfaction

Dissemination of Survey Results

Survey results, including detailed qualitative data, were distributed to key stakeholders in ECU’s service centres and faculties. Qualitative data, which includes verbatim comments from students in response to the open-ended questions, grouped by theme, were also distributed to the appropriate stakeholders.
Stakeholders were also invited to run further analyses via managed reports in the EIM system. In addition, stakeholders were sent a cut of results entitled which includes an added “Derived Importance” measure not available in the EIM system. This shows the extent to which items correlate with Overall Satisfaction. While not necessarily causal, this can provide a proxy for an importance rating alongside the mean scores.

**Responses by Stakeholders**

Consultation was undertaken with all relevant service centre stakeholders and faculties were asked to review and respond to the results of the survey at a local level. Service centre directors, accompanied by senior staff where appropriate, met with a representative from the Planning, Quality and Equity Services Centre, to discuss the survey results for items for which they have lead responsibility.

It was evident that service centre directors had undertaken various activities to analyse, review, and improve the relevant survey results, while in many instances, opportunities for improvement were linked to actions already identified in service centre operational plans for 2014. Particularly noteworthy in this regard:

- The Facilities and Services Centre (FSC) prepared a graphical presentation of the data which was analysed and discussed at a specially-convened all Centre Managers Meeting. FSC then completed an in-depth analysis of the qualitative data and prepared a detailed response to each item.
- The Information Technology Services Centre (ITSC) extracted individual student comments from the qualitative data responses relating to Information Technology services and staff and have used these for Customer Service Professional Development modules to help improve the quality and consistency of customer service.