Support for students during COVID-19 outbreak

ECU has a wide range of support programs for students, and in response to the COVID-19 situation more services are being added to assist students as they transition to remote learning.

**Studying online**

We have developed a guide and instructional videos to help all students who may be transitioning to online study.

1. [Preparing to learn off campus: a guide for students](#)
2. [Panopto instructional videos: ECU learning online](#)
3. [Panopto instructional videos: Using Zoom](#)

If you’re new to online learning or need help, ECU has some excellent resources and advice to help you make the most of the learning technologies you will use online.

If you still have questions or need more support about learning online or with your assignments, you can book an online appointment with a Learning Adviser.

**Changes to the Academic Calendar**

There are several changes to the Academic Calendar which are detailed in the [ECU’s COVID-19 FAQs](#). Some key things to note are:

- ECU has extended the semester until June 26 and doubled your study break to give you that little extra time to get on top of things.
- We are ditching exams and making your study life easier and more flexible. Your Unit Coordinators will advise you of an alternative task for your Unit.
- If you need an extension on an assignment, talk with your Unit Coordinators. They understand that this is a difficult time for everyone and are able to provide extensions of up to 21 days.

**Assistance from Student Success**

[Student Success Officers](#) are available to provide ongoing coordinated support to all students. Success officers are available for one-on-one online appointments for the development of action plans designed to assist students achieve success in their studies at ECU.

You can make an appointment by:

- Booking an appointment online
- phoning 134 328 and ask to be connected to the Student Success Officer on your home campus;
- emailing studentsuccess@ecu.edu.au
Technology

Some laptops for loan and data-packs (wifi dongles) are available for loan through the Library. The overall number of laptops available for loan has been significantly increased.

If you need a laptop or wifi dongle to assist you to continue your studies, complete the Loan Laptop Application Form.

Our team will review all applications as they are submitted. If your application is successful, we will contact you to organise a time for you to come and collect a loan laptop or wifi dongle. Please note that we are currently unable to send laptops or dongles outside Western Australia.

You can email IT Services with any questions about sourcing hardware and software requirements for online learning.

Finding work

If you have recently lost your job, ECU’s Careers Advisers can also help with resume writing, interview skills and advice on what you can do to find work. You can book an online appointment with a Careers Adviser here.

You can also check out the Careers page which has information about upcoming graduate recruitment programs, employers who are currently hiring, and tips for job seeking.

Wellbeing

If you are feeling stressed or anxious, please don’t hesitate to reach out to ECU’s free and confidential Student Counselling Service.

Financial assistance for students receiving social security through Centrelink

The Australian Government has announced several economic stimulus packages to support people receiving social security, including students on Austudy, Abstudy, Youth Allowance, JobSeeker (formerly Newstart), parenting and other allowance payments.

If you are already receiving a payment, the additional benefits that you are eligible for will be automatically paid to you.

- A one-off $750 payment to people on a wide variety of social security payments and concession cards, due in April
- An additional $550 ‘coronavirus supplement’ per fortnight for six months for recipients of Austudy, Abstudy, JobSeeker (formerly Newstart), Youth Allowance, sickness, parenting, partner and farm household allowance payments
- A second $750 one-off payment for all recipients of the first payment from July, provided they are not also receiving the additional coronavirus supplement to their regular payment

Additionally, you will continue to receive your Centrelink payments if the University is asked to close or reduce your study load. More information is available directly from Services Australia.

Financial assistance through ECU

ECU understands that students are facing financial hardship and we are committed to doing everything we can to help. That’s why ECU have developed a range of measures to provide financial assistance to students.
Reduction in SSAF payment

The Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) is a fee approved by the Australian Government. The purpose of the SSAF is to provide student services and amenities beyond those required for the academic work of the University, such as a health, counseling, sport and social clubs. For Semester 1, 2020 students required to pay SSAF, will only be charged the off-campus rate of $46.20. You do not need to take any action, this change will be applied to your record.

Refunds for parking permits

We understand that many of you may not need on-campus parking right now. ECU is offering full refunds on Semester 1 and Full Year parking permits cancelled before 7 April 2020. If you need to cancel your permit, email parking@ecu.edu.au with your intention to cancel before 7 April.

There will be no refunds on Semester 1 permit cancellations after this date. There will be a 50 per cent refund on Full Year permit cancellations received after 7 April and before 31 August. For more information, contact ECU Parking and Security at parking@ecu.edu.au

No late payment fees for Semester 1, 2020

ECU normally charges a late payment fee for Tuition Fees not received by the due date for the applicable teaching period. Late payment fees will not be charged for Semester 1 2020.

Extension of the hardship payment scheme to Domestic Fee-Paying students

The Hardship Payment Scheme enables students who are temporarily experiencing difficulty paying their tuition fees on time, to pay tuition fees in installments. There is no longer need to submit an application to this scheme, the due date for payments has been automatically extended until 1 May 2020. Further extensions may be negotiated on a case by case basis.

Establishing a support grant

ECU seeks to support students experiencing severe financial hardship to support them to remain enrolled and studying. We have established a support grant of up to $2,000 for eligible students. If you are experiencing severe financial hardship, please complete an application for an ECU Support Grant.

Once completed, a Student Success Officer will contact you to discuss your circumstances further and advise what support ECU can provide. Students will be asked to supply evidence of hardship, receipts or other appropriate evidence.

Accommodation Support

Students experiencing challenges with accommodation are encouraged to speak to the team at the Student Hub regarding their situation. In the interim, if you or anyone you know are in this situation, the following information may be of assistance:

- The Australian Government has made it clear that no-one will be evicted during the COVID-19 crisis. Students experiencing challenges with accommodation are encouraged to speak to the team at the Student Hub regarding their situation.

If you or anyone you know are in this situation, the following information may be of assistance:

- ECU provides on campus accommodation at all of our locations. Campus Living Villages provide supportive, safe and accessible apartments and can assist in an emergency.
For tenancy assistance and advice you can also contact Tenancy WA but please remember to also use our ECU services as well.

**Childcare**

We know that many students are also parents and now trying to juggle their studies with having children at home. This is not easy and we would urge you to contact your unit coordinator if this is impacting your study. Unit coordinators can now grant extensions of up to 21 days based on certain criteria.

The Australian Government also recently made the decision to fully subsidise all childcare fees until 28 June 2020. If this creates some options for you, there is more detail available here.

We’ve also developed some resources, links and helpful information about balancing studying and work with carer responsibilities.

**Additional information about COVID-19 for international students**

If you do not speak English as a first language, StudyPerth, the WA Office of Multicultural Interests and SBS online portal provides translated resources, and education and health advice. The wa.gov.au website is the best place to find up-to-date and accurate advice and information.

StudyPerth is collating information to support international students. Sign up to their newsletter or Facebook group to ensure you stay up-to-date with job opportunities and other assistance.

**Mental Health Support**

Take a look at the Australian government's support site for COVID-19 which has some great tips on staying positive.

If you need additional assistance reach out to the Student Counselling team.

You can also call services including Lifeline on 13 11 14

The ECU Out of Hours Crisis Line is also available. Call 1300 583 032 or text 0488 884 232

This phone support service operates from 5pm to 9am on weekdays, and 24 hours on weekends, providing students with mental health and well-being support. The service, which is a collaboration with Lifeline, is intended to help callers find immediate relief from emotional distress, explore coping strategies for the current crisis.

**Stay connected online**

- Keep up with ECU on social media.
- You can also stay connected with other ECU students through the Discussion Board on your unit Blackboard sites.