

ECU Wellbeing Framework

Empowering Staff to Thrive

2024



Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya, Ngalak djoorabiny noona djinanginy. Ngalak kaaditj koora koora Djinang, ngalak kaaditj koora koora Noongarang, moorditj, kaadijin, waangkiny. Ngalak kaaditj moorditj wiirn, moorditj kaadijin Noongarang dandjoo koorl. Ngalak kaaditj nidja Noongar Boodja. Ngalak kaaditj koora koora Noongarang, baalang Noongar Birdiya. Ngalang yaanginy Noongar boodjera yaakiny nyin. Ngalak dandjoo koorliny nidja bidi.

*Hello,
We are happy to see you. We acknowledge the strength, traditional knowledges, language, wisdom and learning practices that has been passed on by Noongar people for thousands of years. We recognise the strong spirit and strong culture that connects Noongar people together. We acknowledge this is Noongar Country. We acknowledge all Noongar people, including the Noongar Elders, as we share this space (Noongar country) together. We walk this path together.*

ECU acknowledges and respects our continuing association with the Whadjuk people and the Wardandi people of the Noongar nation, the traditional custodians of the land upon which our Australian campuses stand.

Danjoo Kaartdijin artwork commissioned by Noongar artist Buffie Corunna.

Message from our Vice Chancellor

At Edith Cowan University, our purpose is clear: to transform lives and enrich society. This purpose drives not only our students but also our dedicated team, who are essential in realising our vision.

We are fortunate to have a diverse, enthusiastic, and committed team collaborating with us. Recognising the pivotal role our staff play in our achievements, we prioritise their health and well-being. We believe that a healthy and supported workforce directly contributes to the excellent educational outcomes we strive for.

Our Wellbeing Framework, designed specifically for our staff, demonstrates our unwavering commitment to supporting each member on their health and well-being journey. This framework takes a comprehensive and accessible approach, acknowledging the unique needs, expectations, and priorities of every individual within our university community. It serves as a pledge to uphold the health and well-being of our workforce, providing a solid foundation for achieving this goal.

Embedded in six foundational pillars - Body, Mind, Community, Finances, Culture, and Purpose - our Wellbeing Framework aligns with our core values of Integrity, Respect, Rational Inquiry, Personal Excellence, and Courage. These pillars serve as guiding principles to ensure that our staff members receive the holistic support they need to thrive personally and professionally.

The launch of our Wellbeing Framework and Plan marks the beginning of an exciting journey for our university community, positioning us for sustained success well beyond 2024. This initiative underscores our commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where every member can flourish.

Professor Steve Chapman
Vice Chancellor



Framework Overview

Empowering the talent and potential of staff, and allowing them to thrive is a key priority in ECU's Strategic Plan 2022-2026. In addition to this important priority, ECU is also committed to promoting and supporting the wellbeing of staff, as detailed in the People and Culture Plan 2023 – 2026 and aligns to various objectives within a number of whole-of-University supporting plans. We know that work can enrich our wellbeing and ECU is committed to working in partnership with staff to optimise this potential.

Given we spend one third of our lives at work, we recognise the impact of work tasks, workplace culture and the campus environment on the wellbeing of staff. The Wellbeing Framework is people focused, evidence-based and acknowledges the demonstrated benefits of good wellbeing practices including increased engagement, vitality, performance, increased staff retention and improved productivity.



Vision

To build a workplace wellbeing culture that enables and supports staff to thrive, flourish and achieve their full potential.

Creating a healthy workplace is a shared responsibility. While individuals make daily choices around their health and wellbeing, ECU will focus on creating an environment, culture, education and opportunities that supports staff to thrive.

This Framework is for all staff*

*Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020-21 National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare - Mental health services in Australia: Physical health of staff with mental illness 2023 and Wellbeing - Better Health Channel



Majority

who are well for most of the time.



Majority

who will be affected by the physical or mental struggles of a loved one in their lifetime.



58%

who wish they could spend more time on improving their health and wellbeing.



43%

who have experienced a mental disorder at some time in their life.




20%

likely to struggle with mental illness in any year.

Defining Wellbeing

Wellbeing refers to the state of feeling healthy and happy. It encompasses several positive facets including: Physical, Mental, Emotional, Life Satisfaction, Sense of Meaning or Purpose, Social Connection and Community Involvement. Wellbeing is a broad experience and is about quality of life and high life satisfaction, positivity, flourishing, balance and happiness.

Wellbeing, Wellness, Health, Psychological Safety and Mental Health are interconnected and influence each other. Prioritising all of the above elements contributes to a healthier, more fulfilling life both within and outside of the workplace.



“A state of wellbeing: not just the absence of disease, but a sense of happiness, contentment and engaging in healthy behaviours.”

PeopleSense by Altius
[Employee Assistance Provider]

Our Wellbeing Approach

The Wellbeing Framework compliments other important staff focused programs to ensure a whole of person approach to empower and proactively support staff to engage in their wellbeing journey. ECU recognises that everyone's wellbeing journey is different, and unique. Thus, it can be a combination of a number of different factors that can improve a person's wellbeing.

Our Wellbeing approach consists of the Wellbeing ecosystem, it's underpinning guiding principles and enablers for success. The Wellbeing Ecosystem describes the six dimensions of wellbeing and how I (the individual), We (teams) and Us (ECU) interact and work together to improve Wellbeing.

Wellbeing Ecosystem - I, We and Us

(3 intersecting layers) and the 6 Dimensions of Wellbeing

I – I or me initiatives are the employees to make and involves personal decisions about their own wellbeing and self-care. I is the individual self reflecting and understanding what matters to them and setting small, personal achievable goals that lead to a sense of fulfilment and purpose. I is the employee recognising their unique life experiences and learning to utilise their strengths mindfully. I initiatives do not require the involvement of others however the employee's family unit, work team and organisation (We and Us) can provide support and resources to enable their wellbeing journey.

We – Group level wellbeing initiatives and actions that encompass the employee working on their wellbeing in collaboration with their immediate work team, their manager or other employees who they work with on a frequent basis. We involves employees working together and enhancing relationships and their sense of purpose at work by understanding and developing a sense of appreciation for each other's life experiences and unique strengths. The We level strategies and tasks are undertaken in a group format and reliant on cooperation and input from others e.g., recharge week.

Us – Us is the organisation or ECU. Us is ECU's vision for wellbeing and the realisation of that vision through the Wellbeing Framework and strategic actions in underpinning annual plans. Us level wellbeing initiatives are inclusive and impact all employees.

The three layers are intertwined and reliant on each other to grow and build a healthy Wellbeing Ecosystem.

(Reference: the_me_we_us_model_final.pdf (aaronjarden.com))

“Positive relationships provide a ripple effect...that can enhance our wellbeing and self-care”

Lemon, N. (2021). Vulnerability, self-care, and the relationship with us and others in higher education. In N. Lemon (Ed.), *Healthy Relationships in Higher Education: Promoting Wellbeing Across Academia* (pp. 1–9). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003144984-1>

Six dimensions of wellbeing

Six dimensions of wellbeing have been identified as being important in supporting the 3 wellbeing layers and ultimately creating a healthy workplace that will enable staff to thrive. Each of the six dimensions are of equal importance, interconnected and supportive of each other.

01

Body

- Moving and caring for the body: Supporting staff to engage in regular physical activity and move at work.
- Preventative health: providing opportunities such as health check-ups, screenings, and vaccinations.
- Physical Wellbeing Literacy: Education on topics such as eating for health and nutritional tips, the importance of exercise and moving the body, the body-mind connection (e.g., breathing for relaxation), sleep health, detoxifying the body including smoking and alcohol intake.

02

Mind

- Emotional wellbeing and self-care: supporting staff with strategies to practice stress management and relaxation techniques that foster inner peace, resiliency and mindfulness.
- Promoting a workplace culture that openly discusses and values mental wellness as an essential aspect of positive relationships, innovation, connection, productivity and creativity.
- Wellbeing Literacy: Education on topics such as stress management and workplace burnout, effective communication, the mind-body connection, self-love, resiliency and the benefits of meditation and mindfulness.

Six dimensions of wellbeing (cont.)

03

Community

- Support networks: Cultivating a sense of belonging and developing meaningful relationships with others. Promoting diverse organisations, clubs, and activities that encourage friendships and collaboration across various backgrounds and interests, while also fostering a work environment where staff feel valued and respected for their unique contributions.
- Fostering connections and caring for others: engaging in activities such as volunteering, donating, giving and generally showing care for others - within ECU and outside ECU i.e., engaging with the broader community.
- Supporting diversity and inclusion by promoting acceptance, understanding and respect for individuals with different backgrounds and identities.

04

Finances

- Financial Wellbeing: Supporting staff with knowledge and skills necessary to make informed financial decisions, reduce financial stress, and plan for financially secure futures
- Retirement Planning: Providing information for staff who are considering retirement, while also incorporating factors that support a smooth transition into retirement
- Financial literacy: Providing access to resources such as financial assistance programs, advice, and tools, while also ensuring a safe work environment where staff feel comfortable seeking guidance and support for financial concerns without fear of judgment or negative consequences.

Six dimensions of wellbeing (cont.)

05

Culture

- Cultural Responsiveness: Providing opportunities to be culturally responsive so staff feel supported to participate, practice, and be involved in cultural activities.
- Celebration of Diversity: Celebrating different cultures within the university community and nurturing a sense of belonging, respect, and appreciation for different backgrounds and perspectives, while actively enabling supervisors, managers, and leaders to create inclusive environments that value and leverage diversity as a strength.
- Intercultural Exchange: Creating opportunities for intercultural exchanges, facilitating cultural events, supporting employee representation of various cultures, and providing resources for multicultural education.

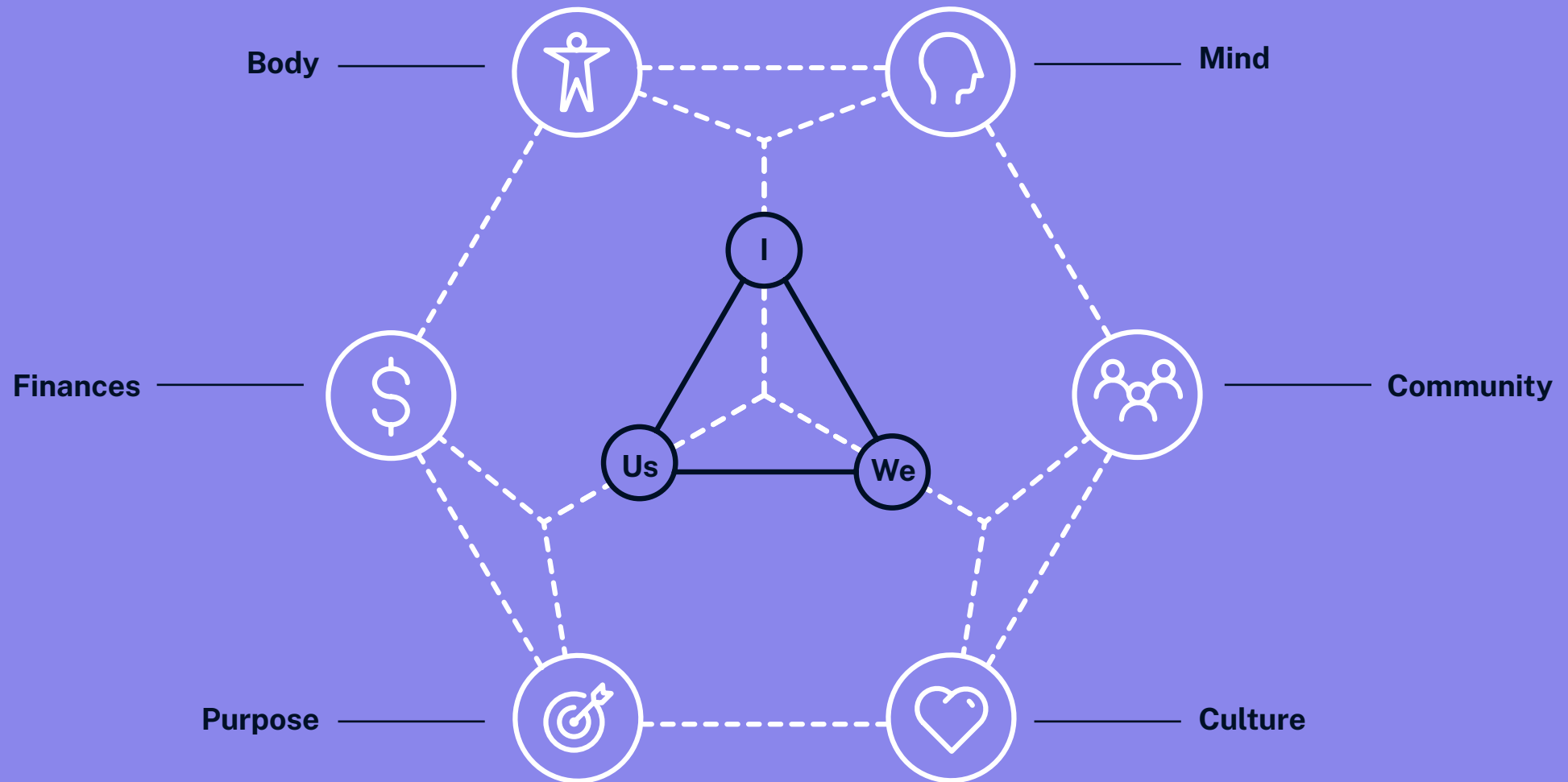
06

Purpose

- Purpose driven life: Creating support for staff to explore and nurture their personal growth, values, beliefs and the activities that energise them including creativity and self-expression.
- Providing opportunities in the workplace to recognise staff's contributions and achievements.
- Literacy (Internal and External Sources): Providing accessibility to resources on life purpose and life meaning

The Wellbeing Ecosystem

The three layers and wellbeing dimensions are interconnected and work in partnership to grow and build a healthy Wellbeing Ecosystem that empowers people to flourish in their unique journey in achieving positive wellbeing.



The Guiding Principles underpinning the Framework

The Framework reflects the following guiding principles:

- An evidence-based approach;
- Initiatives will be holistic, sustainable and integrated where possible;
- ECU will work in partnership with staff to enable and support wellbeing;
- Initiatives will be culturally, mentally and physically appropriate and safe;
- Initiatives will be inclusive and accessible; and
- ECU leaders will support, integrate and facilitate wellbeing initiatives.



The Enablers for Success



Prevention and Reduction

Partnering with other work programs including the psychological safety risk management and leadership capability programs to prevent and reduce work-related risks to the mental health and wellbeing of staff.

Culture and Capability

Supporting all staff to be well-equipped and invested in workplace wellbeing and fostering a supportive workplace culture. Building leadership capability by supporting leaders and managers to become well equipped and invested in wellbeing and incorporating wellbeing practices amongst all teams. Establishing partnerships with internal and external wellbeing experts to increase our wellbeing capability, capacity and impact.

Promotion and Education

Utilising various communication methods and styles to promote wellbeing and providing education and resources for staff to increase awareness and literacy on wellbeing topics and how to apply that learning in the context of the 3 layers (I, We, Us).

Management and Recovery

Reducing stigma in our workplaces and developing strategies to support staff to manage wellbeing.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Implementing monitoring and evaluation strategies to engage in continuous improvement of the Wellbeing Framework including measurement of Wellbeing Culture.

Our Wellbeing Journey

2024 is the start of a progressive and exciting approach to ECU's Wellbeing journey, with the Wellbeing Framework being an aspirational blueprint for establishing an ECU Wellbeing Plan (Wellbeing Plan).

The Wellbeing Plan will be a living document, able to evolve to accommodate ECU's requirements, complimenting and interconnecting related project work, staff feedback and priorities. Wellbeing Plan will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment of activities with the vision and guiding principles of the Framework and ensure that wellbeing initiatives are delivering intended outcomes. ECU's University Work, Health and Safety Committee will govern the Wellbeing Framework through effective oversight and reporting. This approach will ensure a solid foundation to successfully implement, monitor, evaluate, review and resource the Framework.

Understanding ECU's current Wellbeing culture and state and measuring improvements over time is integral to supporting continuous improvement and long-term success of the overall Wellbeing program. Key Performance Indicators will be set and monitored to drive future improvements to the Wellbeing program.

Effective implementation and successfully achieving the vision of the Wellbeing Framework will require collaborative efforts and we look forward to active involvement and partnerships with all staff and stakeholders.

