



POLICY

Policy Title: Management of Student Loan

Policy Owner: Student Finance and SSC Business Manager

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1. INTENT

The intent of this policy is to provide guidance on the management of student loan funds at Edith Cowan University (ECU).

2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This policy applies to all domestic students enrolled in an award or VET course at ECU.

International students are not eligible for student loans but they may be entitled to apply for other emergency loans intended for them.

3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Census Date	Means the date at which a student's fee liability is assessed. The Census dates are normally March 31 and August 31 but could vary depending on the academic period.
Currently Enrolled	Means the student has a course status of enrolled at ECU and is studying in the current Teaching Period or; the student has status of inactive and

	has re-enrolled in a Teaching Period yet to commence (i.e. between teaching periods).
Delegated Officer	Means the Officer authorised to administer loans under this policy.
DIISRTE	Means the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.
Domestic Students	Means students who are Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens or holders of an Australian permanent residency visa.
Financial or Administrative Encumbrance	Means a penalty placed on a student's record, normally for non-payment of monies owing or failure to provide mandatory information such as a tax file number. The encumbrance remains in force until the default is rectified and the overdue amount is paid in full. An encumbrance may restrict access to services provided by the University including computing and library access, and approval to graduate.
Good Standing	Means an academic progression status applied to students who are making satisfactory academic progress.
International student	Means a student defined as such by the relevant Acts of the Commonwealth of Australia.
Probation	Means the academic progression status applied to students deemed to have made marginal academic progress but permitted to continue their studies.
Student Contribution Amount	Means the amount a Commonwealth supported student pays towards the cost of undertaking units of study at University.
Teaching Period	Means the period of time within which a unit is undertaken and formally assessed and for which assessment results are confirmed by Board of Examiners.
Unit	Means a unit of study that can form part of a program of study necessary to qualify for a university higher education award.
VET	Means the Vocational Education and Training sector of tertiary education which provides Certificates II, III and IV, Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas as specified in the Australian Qualifications Framework.

4. POLICY CONTENT

- 4.1 Student loans will be offered to domestic students and will be interest free.
- 4.2 The maximum loan amount will not exceed \$1500. The minimum amount will not be less than \$500. Students can only receive a maximum of two loans whilst studying at ECU and can only apply for a second time if the first loan is repaid in full in accordance with the loan agreement and without any defaults.

- 4.3 The total amount of funds to be made available in each calendar year may be restricted. This amount can be determined by the Student Finance and SSC Business Manager in consultation with the Director, Student Services Centre as and when deemed appropriate.

Eligibility

- 4.4 Students must meet all eligibility requirements to receive a loan.
- 4.5 Priority in the allocation of funds shall be given to students:
- 4.5.1 from country or isolated areas or who are required to live away from home to pursue their studies; or
 - 4.5.2 from disadvantaged groups (as defined by DIISRTE and amended from time to time); or
 - 4.5.3 with low personal incomes; or
 - 4.5.4 if dependent children, from families with low incomes as can be demonstrated by a Centrelink allowance.
- 4.6 In order to be eligible for a student loan the applicant must:
- 4.6.1 be a currently enrolled student, in an award or VET course, of the University at the time of application and at the time the loan is granted. Studying in a bridging or enabling course such as University Preparation Course (UPC) does not entitle a student to apply for a student loan;
 - 4.6.2 have an academic progression status of either good-standing or probation and making progress towards the completion of their course;
 - 4.6.3 have successfully completed a minimum of 30 credit points in their course at ECU;
 - 4.6.4 have no current financial/administrative encumbrance against their student record;
 - 4.6.5 have no current debts including any outstanding ECU Student Loan;
 - 4.6.6 demonstrate a genuine need; and
 - 4.6.7 meet all other administrative requirements as specified in the application documentation.
- 4.7 Applicants may be required to provide additional evidence related to the reason for their application, for example written quotes, invoices, statements or other relevant documents.
- 4.8 Students are restricted from applying for loans in the following circumstances:
- 4.8.1 they are in receipt of funding from any other University sources for the same purpose (e.g. Students in receipt of an Accommodation Scholarship may not apply for a loan for accommodation expenses); and
 - 4.8.2 they have placed themselves in considerable financial hardship, including when ongoing expenses have fallen into arrears.

- 4.9 Loans may not be used to pay tuition fees, fines or service charges.

Repayments

- 4.10 Applicants will be required to repay the loan according to an agreed schedule of repayments and loan period not exceeding 12 months.
- 4.11 Loan repayments must not be less than \$20.00 per fortnight.
- 4.12 Students that have less than 12 months left of their course can apply for a student loan. If granted, they have to repay the monies within the time they have left before completing their course.
- 4.13 Scheduled repayments via Centrepay will be the principal method for repayment, with direct debit banking being the secondary method of repayment for students that do not receive a payment from Centrelink.
- 4.14 In exceptional circumstances the original schedule of repayments and final repayment date may be renegotiated. Any extension to the loan repayment schedule may only be granted:
- Once;
 - In the final half of the loan repayment period; and
 - Provided loan repayments are not in arrears.
- 4.15 Students who discontinue their course of study must repay the outstanding proportion of their loan within 20 working days of discontinuation.
- 4.16 Students who complete their studies at ECU must repay the outstanding proportion prior to graduation, or graduation processes will not be commenced.
- 4.17 Non-payment of loans may result in debt recovery action.
- 4.18 Students must contact the Scholarships Office should their personal circumstances change. This includes change of bank details, when the student is no longer receiving a Centrelink Allowance, etc.
- 4.19 Students who default on their payment schedule may be deemed to be liable for the immediate repayment of any overdue amount on that loan in addition to any Financial Institutions payment-default fees incurred.
- 4.20 Students who default on their loan will have a financial encumbrance placed on their record and if the overdue amount is not paid in full, some or all of the following actions may be taken until the overdue amount is paid in full:
- suspension of their access to the University or part of the University; or
 - official notification of their examination or other assessment results restricted; or
 - cancellation of their enrolment; or
 - deferment of the conferral on them of any degree, diploma or certificate; or
 - their re-enrolment in a subsequent teaching period not permitted.

- 4.21 Students whose application for a loan has been rejected, may appeal to the relevant entity within the Student Services Centre in accordance with published information available at: <http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/fees/loans>.

5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In relation to this policy, the following positions are responsible for the following

Policy Owner

The Policy Owner the Student Finance and SSC Business Manager has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation in ECU.

Staff and students are required to comply with the content of this policy and to seek guidance in the event of uncertainty as to its application.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- 6.1. The policy is supported by the following Guidelines:
Management of Student Loan Guidelines
- 6.2 Other documents which are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

ECU Student Loan - Application Information:
http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/fees/loans/loan_info.php

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

Policy Owner	Student Finance and SSC Business Manager
All Enquiries Contact:	Student Finance and SSC Business Manager
Telephone:	08 6304 3883
Email address:	d.marshall@ecu.edu.au

8. APPROVAL HISTORY

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GUIDELINES

Linked to: Management of Student Loan Policy

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1. Intent

These guidelines describe processes and procedures for processing Student Loan applications by ECU staff.

2. Process

- 2.1 Loan funds should be approved with the intent to assist ECU students to successfully complete their course by improving their financial situation;
- 2.2 Applications must be assessed and processed in an equitable and timely manner, normally within 5 working days;
- 2.3 Student Counsellors or Student Connect Officers within the Student Services Centre may recommend a student for a loan following an interview in the normal course of their work;
- 2.4 The total amount of funds to be made available in each calendar year may be restricted. This amount can be determined by the Manager, Student Finance in consultation with the Director, Student Services Centre as and when deemed appropriate; and
- 2.5 A student granted a loan shall sign an undertaking in the form of the Student Loan Agreement that the funds provided shall only be used for the purposes identified in his or her application and that any conditions imposed on the grant of the loan shall be adhered to.

3. Repayments

- 3.1 The repayment schedule is to be determined by the Delegated Officer, unless otherwise determined by the Manager Student Finance, the repayment schedule in the Loan Agreement must provide that:
 - 3.1.1 the loan must be repaid within 12 months;
 - 3.1.2 repayments are to be based on the formulae:
Total Loan Sum)/26
- 3.2 The Delegated Officer will be responsible for maintaining the Centrepay and direct debit schedule and transmitting the schedules after appropriate approval has been received;
- 3.3 Debt recovery action will be managed by the responsible team in the Finance and Business Services Centre.

4. Inclusions/Exclusions

The following list is intended as a guide to the items and services for which a student may be granted a loan. The list is not exhaustive and may be changed from time to time at the discretion of the Student Services Centre. Loans for items not listed here may be granted at the discretion of the responsible Manager.

4.1 Loans may be granted to assist with payment of:

- University text books and other essential unit related materials;
- repairs to essential transport (car, motorcycle, bicycle etc) where loss of the same would jeopardise the student's ability to continue their studies;
- up-front charges related to securing accommodation (e.g. removal expenses, bond) provided the applicant is not in receipt of other bond assistance;
- charges for connection of essential services (e.g. Electricity, telephone);
- medical expenses for essential services that cannot be met via the Medicare or private health rebates schemes;
- costs related to personal emergencies (e.g. travel costs);
- purchase or repair of basic essential items or utilities (e.g. fridge, replacement locks, plumbing, electrical, gas);
- costs related to seeking employment (e.g. resume development); or
- essential computer equipment (conditions apply)

4.2 Loans shall not be granted for the following reasons:

- accommodation costs where the student is living at home under the care of parents or guardians;
- tuition fees;
- holidays;
- purchase or lease of vehicles;
- entertainment; or
- clothing

5. Applications

- 5.1 Applicants will be required to complete all necessary application requirements as required in accordance with published information available at <http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/fees/loans>.