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Vice-Chancellor



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The Secretary
Senate Select Committee on the Scrutiny of New Taxes
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email: newtaxes@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE SCRUTINY OF NEW TAXES : Inquiry into
Compulsory Student Fees**

Attached is Edith Cowan University's submission in relation to the Select Committee on the Scrutiny of New Taxes in relation to the inquiry into compulsory student fees.

I confirm that the University has no objection to its submission being made publically available.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KOCox', written in a cursive style.

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Vice-Chancellor

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE SCRUTINY OF NEW TAXES:
Inquiry into compulsory student fees**

Submission by Edith Cowan University

1. Edith Cowan University (ECU) notes that the Commonwealth Government wishes to progress the *Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Bill 2010*. ECU supports the intent of this Bill.
2. ECU considers that services in the areas of advocacy and representation, health and welfare, social and cultural activities and sport and recreation enrich the student experience and support academic outcomes.
3. ECU supports the view of Universities Australia that lack of ready access to such services may be a barrier to successful study for many students. This is particularly so for students from low socio-economic, Indigenous and/or disabled backgrounds. Such services are vital for students away from their home networks, such as rural and regional students as well as many International students.
4. ECU considers that the delivery of these services in partnership with an effective student association provides the best level of service to students, and engages students in assisting fellow students. Citizenship and self-reliance are built upon activities such as community service, volunteering, mentoring and encouraging responsibility – much of which can be fostered through a vibrant student body underpinned by sustainable student associations.
5. The introduction of Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) has had a negative impact on student services at ECU.
6. Without the compulsory fee envisaged under the *Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Bill 2010*, it is likely that services to students will deteriorate. Student associations which are unable to achieve financial independence will continue to require funding from their university, or will cease to become an effective mechanism for student representation and support. Universities need a model which does not divert funds from teaching and learning and research towards supporting student associations.
7. It is the view of ECU that it is students who will be the greatest losers if VSU continues – particularly those students who are at the greatest risk and those who need the greatest support.
8. ECU therefore supports the introduction of a compulsory student services and amenities fee, at an amount determined by the University's Governing Body, to support the provision of a range of essential student services which enhance the student experience and support academic success.



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