

# **An analysis of the performance of students entering Edith Cowan University undergraduate degrees**

James Millar, Director Learning and Development Services, Edith Cowan University  
&  
Patricia Formentin, Manager University Preparation, Edith Cowan University

Contact Details for principal author are:

Learning and Development Services  
Edith Cowan University  
Mount Lawley Campus  
2 Bradford Street  
Mount Lawley  
WA 6050

Phone: 9370 6547  
Fax: 9370 6333  
Email: [j.millar@ecu.edu.au](mailto:j.millar@ecu.edu.au)

## Author biographies

Dr Jim Millar is Director of Edith Cowan University's Learning and Development Services. He provides leadership in the development of teaching and learning resources, professional development of academic staff and the delivery of ECU's University Preparation Course and associated Aspirations project.

Dr Trish Formentin is Manager University Preparation at ECU. In that role she has carried out evaluation studies of students entering the University through alternative entry pathways and tracked the progress of representative groups.

## **An analysis of the performance of students entering Edith Cowan University undergraduate degrees**

*An initial study showed a high rate of 'attrition' of students from TAFE (43%) compared with ECU's University Preparation Course (9%). Further investigation compared the performance of students who entered ECU from TAFE with a Certificate IV and a Diploma or Associate Diploma. The data showed that students from TAFE with a Certificate IV performed relatively poorly compared to students from TAFE with an Associate Diploma/Diploma and also compared to University Preparation Course entrants who entered the University over the same period. The mean Course Average in July 2003 of students who entered ECU from TAFE on the basis of a Certificate IV was CA 51.7 and may possibly reflect academic difficulties related to study at University. For both groups, the most common reason for pulling out of university was classified as 'factors unrelated to university', e.g., financial, personal or work related factors (Certificate IV 46% and Associate Diploma/Diploma 42%). Unfortunately, ECU does not have comparative figures for other intake groups. Course-related issues, particularly moving to another university to study, accounted for 14% Certificate IV and 35.5% Associate Diploma/Diploma students who withdrew or deferred their study. Implications of these findings for ECU are examined.*