

## **University Contact Officer Role Description, Purpose and Objectives**

### **1. Role/Purpose**

University Contact Officers (UCOs) perform an important role by acting as an alternative point of contact for ECU staff and students on matters related to harassment, discrimination and/or victimisation. UCOs provide information to ECU staff and students on policies and procedures related to the prevention, reporting and resolution of harassment, discrimination and/or victimisation. UCOs also provide appropriate information on services available to assist in resolving issues of concern.

### **2. Objectives of the UCO role**

The primary objectives of the role are to:

- provide information to the staff/student to enable them to make an informed choice as to how to deal with their complaint;
- as appropriate note possible strategies an individual can use to discuss a situation directly with another person;
- provide information about the options available to resolve an individual's concerns;
- provide information on ECU policies and procedures related to discrimination, harassment and bullying;
- provide information on internal and external options for reporting and resolution;
- provide the individual with information relating to counselling and/or other support services that they are able to access;
- if the individual wishes to make a formal complaint the UCO will provide them with the appropriate information of how this can be initiated;
- allow the person to choose their resolution and/or reporting option/s;
- maintain confidentiality (except where there are limits to confidentiality – see below); and
- model positive behaviours and promote an inclusive study and work environment.

### **3. Responsibilities of the role**

UCOs are required to:

- complete EO Online [Equal Opportunity Online] course and undertake refresher training every two years;
- complete the Contact Officer Role training delivered by the WA Equal Opportunity Commission;
- keep up-to-date with relevant University policies, procedures and support services;
- complete and submit the Contact Report form (for statistical purposes) each time they receive any contact from a student or staff member;
- model appropriate behaviour, consistent with the ECU of Conduct; and
- if they have any concerns or require guidance about any situation or process, contact the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous); P: (08) 6304 6170 or E: [equity@ecu.edu.au](mailto:equity@ecu.edu.au).

### **4. UCOs will not:**

- act as an advocate for staff/students;
- direct or influence staff/students to take a particular course of action;
- provide counselling;
- provide legal advice;
- participate in matters where a real or potential conflict of interest may exist;
- investigate, conciliate or mediate complaints;
- provide support on matters other than harassment, discrimination, or victimisation; or
- breach confidentiality (except in situations outlined below).

## **5. Confidentiality requirements**

UCOs are required to maintain confidentiality unless there is:

- Written consent given by the person to disclose information to a third party;
- imminent danger of serious harm to self or others; or
- an overriding legal obligation.

These requirements and limitations of confidentiality must always be explained to any staff member or student at the earliest opportunity in any discussion/correspondence.

If UCOs require University guidance on these matters they will, in the first instance, contact the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Inclusion) (on 08 6304 6170 or [equity@ecu.edu.au](mailto:equity@ecu.edu.au)) who will seek appropriate advice on the issue.

## **6. Membership**

Staff members interested in undertaking the UCO role can email their expression of interest to: [equity@ecu.edu.au](mailto:equity@ecu.edu.au). Staff members must have the approval of their line manager as well as the Executive Dean/Director of their School/Centre to undertake all the requirements of the UCO role including the training requirements. Approval must be provided by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous) for the staff member to be appointed as a UCO.

## **7. Oversight of the UCO program**

Oversight of the UCO program is provided the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous). Equity Project Officers are available to provide further support and advice to UCOs regarding matters related to harassment, discrimination, or victimisation.

Equity Project Officer  
Phone: (08) 6304 6170  
Email: [equity@ecu.edu.au](mailto:equity@ecu.edu.au)

If there are concerns relating to a staff member performing the role of the UCO, and/or there appears to be a conflict of interest, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous) reserves the right to remove the staff member from the UCO role.