

From Student to Student Adviser: A Delicate Transition

Nicholas Tan¹, Megan Jager²

1 ECU International, Edith Cowan University, Pearson Street, Churchlands, WA 6018, n.tan@ecu.edu.au.

2 ECU International, Edith Cowan University, Pearson Street, Churchlands, WA 6018, m.jager@ecu.edu.au

Trends indicate that increasing numbers of International students are applying for Permanent Residency in Australia after their studies. International student leaders are endowed with academic knowledge, and the skills and experience of having worked in an International student environment.

In 2003, when one of its student advisers left, Edith Cowan University's (ECU) International Student Support Team realised it needed to fill the void quickly. Believing strongly in the importance of student consultation in planning its activities, it tapped into one of its student leaders on a temporary basis, and almost immediately realised the permanent benefits this scenario could provide. Since then, it has gone on to hire more staff from the student leader cohort in a range of positions.

This paper discusses the transition from student and peer, to staff and authority figure in the context of the ECU experience. It explores in depth the advantages and challenges this brings to, and from the perspective of, the student population and the International Office.

Key Words

International Student Adviser, Support Services, Transition, Peer Support, Enhance Services.