

The Academic Literacy Education Certificate

Principal Author: Lesley Andrew

Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery.

l.andrew@ecu.edu.au

Tel: 6304 3489

Intended audience: Academics and students ECU.

Key words : Academic, literacy, support.

Additional Authors:

Joyce Hendricks, Snr Lecturer and Coordinator of Higher Degrees

Amanda Fowler, Nurse Lecturer

Carol Crevacore, Nurse Lecturer

Rochelle Russo, Nurse Lecturer

Jade Parker- Manderson, Nurse Lecturer

Gina Mata, Lecturer and Undergraduate Clinical Coordinator

Principal Author Biography

I am a nurse lecturer for Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Western Australia. I presently coordinate Evidence Based Practice and Primary Health Care undergraduate units and supervise nursing masters' students. I am a Registered Nurse and Registered Health Visitor (UK) and have extensive practice, management and leadership experience in primary health care nursing. I hold a BSc (Hons) in both biological sciences and public health nursing and a Masters of Health Professional Education. I have begun my PhD studies focussing on the subject of education, gender ideology and interpersonal relationships. My published work includes; A Focussed Review of HIV and AIDS, Skin Cancer Detection by Community Nurses and Oral Health Promotion in Primary Nursing. My interests include mature student nurse education, student mentoring and student academic literacy.

ALEC presentation- Ensuring the Continued Employability Excellence of ECU Graduate Nurses

This presentation will outline the Academic Literacy Education Certificate (ALEC), an academic literacy support project currently being piloted with undergraduate semester-one nursing students at Edith Cowan University. The purpose and the development of this initiative will be discussed in terms of its facilitation of the achievement of ECU graduate attributes and the promotion of the employability of today's student cohort.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery within Edith Cowan University (ECU) is the largest School of Nursing in Western Australia attracting both domestic and international students. In common with other Australian Universities, a significant proportion of undergraduate nursing students at ECU are 'non-traditional', in that they may be mature- aged, first in family to attend and/or from a low socio-economic status background.

Many non- traditional students have no recent academic learning experience however, in keeping with ECU's mission of fair access and opportunity, the undergraduate nursing programme admission policy attracts and welcomes students with a range of evidence of ability, such as portfolio of prior learning, or foundation course qualifications. Whilst this equitable approach ensures a rich and diverse range of student contribution to learning across the curriculum, a further consequence is that a proportion of students begin their university career with limited skills and knowledge in academic areas which are essential and expected elements for undergraduate study.

Nursing Academics, in response to the challenge of student diversity and the associated range in presenting academic literacy, has developed and piloting an in-house learning support programme. This contextual learning unit is currently being undertaken by first semester students and focuses on the basic literacy areas of understanding academic assessment terminology, academic writing skills, referencing and plagiarism.

In order to ensure ECU Graduate Nurses continue to enjoy high levels of employability, the ALEC project focuses on and incorporates the ECU graduate attributes of 'communication' and 'critical appraisal skills', and the distinctive feature of 'employability orientation', essential skills and attributes for the contemporary professional nurse.