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**ECU appoints new Vice-Chancellor**

A scientist with extensive experience in higher education around the world is to become the next Vice-Chancellor of Edith Cowan University (ECU). Professor Kerry Cox, who spent his early academic life in Western Australia, has been appointed by ECU’s governing Council for a five-year term from March 2006.

Professor Cox, 59, has been Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ballarat for almost five years. At present he chairs the Victorian Vice-Chancellors’ Committee. He is a microbiologist/immunologist who held senior positions at Flinders University in South Australia before transferring to Ballarat.

ECU’s Chancellor, Hendy Cowan, says Professor Cox has a strong record of establishing linkages between universities and government, business, industry and community groups. Recently Professor Cox was one of only 35 Vice-Chancellors from around the world invited to a meeting in France by Tufts University (USA) to share ideas on the ways universities can become more relevant to their communities.

“He has an enviable reputation for ensuring that university work is relevant to the communities that support the university. ECU’s Council is confident that his experience and leadership will be of great value as we continue to build our reputation for relevance and excellence for the service professions,” Mr Cowan said. “Professor Cox also has good connections with the technology and performing arts sectors.”

Professor Cox said he was delighted to be returning to Perth, one of the great cities of the world. “ECU has a very good record of service over an extended period and has done particularly well in establishing itself as a responsive, relevant and rigorous university under Millicent Poole’s leadership,” he said. “It is my honour to be her successor.”

The appointment follows an international executive search. Mr Cowan said the appointment also clarified ECU’s planning for the future. “The Council does not intend ECU to be part of any merger considerations,” he said. “The University will focus on its core business of teaching/learning, research and community service, particularly for the communities of the north metropolitan region and the State’s South-West.”

Mr Cowan paid tribute to the transforming work of Professor Poole over the past eight and a half years. “She has made a huge difference to ECU and the Council applauds her achievements.”

Professor Poole retires in December.

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