



Edith Cowan University Case Study: Agile Transformation

How ECU improved their delivery following an Agile Process Optimisation, leading to highly engaged, performing, and collaborative delivery teams.



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*Leanne Howard
Business Agility Practice
Director
Planit*

KEY OUTCOMES:

- Improved delivery approach following an Agile Process Optimisation.
- Highly engaged and performing delivery teams who work collaboratively with business representatives.

Established in 1991, Edith Cowan University (ECU) has rapidly grown into a quality university with excellent student satisfaction and internationally recognised research. Students and graduates at ECU are considered among the best in the world.

ECU is ranked in the world’s top universities under 50 years old. According to The Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching, the teaching quality is rated 5 stars for 2018 and has been for 11 years in a row by graduates.

A trusted partner

Planit has been engaged at ECU since 2014, and in 2017, was awarded the preferred supplier of testing services for ECU. Since then, Planit has become a highly trusted partner through a strong delivery across all major areas of Quality Engineering.

This relationship grew in 2017 when Planit were chosen to assist ECU with their signature, transformative program, Service Excellence (SE). This program aimed to introduce a 360-degree view of students, from prospective marketing to enrolled and participating students, and to past students/alumni.

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Leanne Howard
Business Agility Practice
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DELIVERED:

- Testing & QA
 - Business Agility
 - Agile & SAFe Training
 - Staff Augmentation
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TECHNOLOGIES:

- Atlassian Jira
- Atlassian Confluence

The scale and nature of the program required a fresh approach to delivery, and the Program Director and Manager, University PMO, Debbie Long, recognised Agile as the means to do it. Debbie has been an enthusiastic proponent of Agile, and her choice has been proven right, with Agile providing the framework for close business involvement, experimentation with the new platform, and new ways of working that accommodate a wide variety of local, interstate and overseas team members.

Adopting Agile

After providing all testing services for stage 1 of the program, Planit was approached to also provide Agile services, including Scrum Masters, for the delivery teams.

Planit Principal Consultant, Don Sharp, was chosen to provide Agile coaching, facilitate Agile rituals, and perform the role of Scrum Master. After an initial two months of implementing an Agile framework rooted in solid Agile principles, but tailored to the specific needs of ECU, Planit then ran an Agile Process Optimisation (APO) exercise at ECU.

Planit Business Agility Practice Director, Leanne Howard, led the APO effort, working across all SE team members, and offering her experienced advice to help refine the Agile roadmap, including techniques to be used.

The APO delivery included workshops with SE team members to shape the optimal delivery approach, including introducing practices for requirements gathering such as the “3 Amigos” technique, daily stand-ups, retrospectives, story tracking in JIRA, documentation and testing in Confluence. This included generating a complete library capturing ECU-specific Agile practices, diagrams of team structures, clearly defined Agile roles and responsibilities, and templates for User Stories and Agile-testing session sheets.

Continuous improvement

As a large organisation with a long-established Waterfall delivery approach for projects, ECU faced the typical challenges adopting Agile. However, the choice of Planit, with its quality-focused approach to implementing Agile practices, meant quality and risk-minimisation were at the forefront of the program’s delivery success.

In partnership with Planit, the SE program has become a flag bearer for the approach, demonstrating what’s achievable when Agile principles are applied to even the largest of projects. Evidence of Agile success at ECU is the tight, focused, highly engaged and performing delivery teams, who are empowered to work collaboratively with business representatives.

The ECU/Planit partnership continues today, approaching 10 years of working together with Planit delivering value across ECU’s extensive delivery program.

ABOUT PLANIT:

No matter where you are on your Agile transformation journey, we offer a broad range of consultation, assessment, training, and coaching services that enable your teams to deliver better outcomes faster, embed quality in every iteration, and adopt 'shift left' practices.

Find out how our Agile Quality experts can help you understand your Agile maturity and fast-track your journey to Agile success with quality embedded throughout.

Planit is passionate and proud of its partnership with ECU, and likewise, ECU is extremely satisfied with Planit's engagement. They have acknowledged the noticeable value Planit has added to their organisation and continuous improvement to customer satisfaction.

If you are starting on your Agile journey, or feel that you are not getting the value from implementing Agile that you thought, visit our Business Agility section or contact us today to find out how we can assist.