



# Wesley College

*A Residential College within The University of Sydney*

## Transparency Report 2013

College Life Under the Lens

### **Introduction**

The experience of students of The University of Sydney who choose to reside on campus during their time at university is under increasing scrutiny. Providing a unique residential experience underpinned by a safe, diverse and inclusive community, where respect for the individual and achievement are paramount is at the heart of Wesley's identity and defines us. It is about more than somewhere to live – it is about providing an environment where everyone feels included, secure, challenged to extend their horizons, and emotionally and academically supported so that they may be the very best they can be. Students at Wesley are provided with a wide choice of co-curricular activities and leadership opportunities to enhance their ability to experience a well rounded education. At a time when technologies and online learning are becoming an integral part of our university experience, the interactive living and learning environment in College life is even more important.

This is our first voluntary Transparency Report. It is founded on our Vision *to be the University of Sydney's most respected Residential College and to be known as the place where Students flourish and lifelong connections are forged*; and our four key Values – *Community, the Individual, Achievement and Inclusiveness*.

I trust this Transparency Report will enable useful insights by all stakeholders into how Wesley strives to provide a safe, vibrant community of learning and personal growth in a way which helps our students develop qualities and values that will underpin their everyday lives.

Deborah Page AM  
Chairman  
Wesley College Council



## **What is Wesley College?**

Wesley is one of eight on-campus Residential Colleges at The University of Sydney. Wesley provides fully furnished and catered accommodation to primarily undergraduate students. In recent years the College has been home to around 230 students annually, with numbers for 2013 lower at 186 due to extensions to the College which are now complete. In 2014 the College will offer around 265 places.

### *History*

Wesley was incorporated by an Act of the NSW State Parliament in 1910 as a College of the Methodist Church in Australia and was opened in 1917 with nine students and Rev M Scott Fletcher as the first Master. It became a College of the Uniting Church in 1977. Prior to 1969 the College admitted only men as students but since then it has enrolled both male and female students and is the oldest co-ed College at The University of Sydney.

### *Administrative Context*

The College Council provides oversight of the College, and is comprised of a mix of Uniting Church members, elected Old Collegians, the Master and two student representatives (one male, one female). The Moderator of the Uniting Church is the Visitor to the College and has the right to examine the manner in which the College is conducted and to confirm compliance with laws and regulations. Day to day administration of the College rests with the College Master and her team, which includes a Vice Master, Sports Director, Business Manager, Pastoral Care Chaplain, Development Manager and Student Residential Assistants.

### *Student Leadership*

Wesley has an active student body, with students running almost every aspect of the sporting, social and cultural activities of College life themselves. The students elect a Senior Student and House Committee each year. Students' Club activities include musical soirees, drama productions, social sport, parties, highly competitive intercollegiate sporting and cultural competitions, a major music event open to the public and voluntary work in the community.

### *Wesley College Foundation*

Old Collegians and friends of Wesley provide ongoing support to current and future students through generous donations to maintain and enhance our buildings and facilities, and to provide much needed scholarship support, primarily to those who "*but for the scholarship*" would not be able to pursue their studies at The University of Sydney.

## ***Tone at the Top***

The Governance structure of the College has been modernised as recently as April 2012, and incorporates clear lines of responsibility and skilled and experienced people in the right positions to influence outcomes.

Wesley's well articulated Values (refer Appendix 1) are embedded in our policies and demonstrated in the way we manage the College.

We recognise that the *tone at the top* drives culture and accepted behaviours. We make it clear that a safe and inclusive environment, appropriate and respectful behaviours, and academic progression are all non-negotiables at Wesley.

## ***Admission of the Right Students***

One of the keys to ensuring the right residential experience is to carefully offer admission to those young men and women who can demonstrate an affinity with our Values. We actively seek to promote equity of access and we value diversity of gender, background and thought.

Admission is on a year to year basis, with no automatic right of readmission. Failure to progress academically and/or behave consistently in an acceptable manner means students forfeit readmission.

In 2013 66 new *Freshers* were admitted to the College, comprising 33 males and 33 females undertaking a range of degrees across the University. The origin of these students was:

Sydney Metro	12
Country NSW	35
Interstate	10
Overseas	9

Our new Students completed their secondary education as follows:

State High School	11
Private (GPS/CAS/IGGSA/ISA)	40
Independent	7
Overseas	8

Approximately one third of our 2013 intake could demonstrate a connection to the College through a parent, sibling or close relative and this year even a great grandparent.

In 2013, 18 students were not offered readmission at the start of the year. At year's end, 8 students were not offered readmission.

## ***Clear Expectations of Standards of Behaviour and Robust Disciplinary Processes***

Community life in College depends upon the respectful, responsible and cooperative conduct of individual residents. We expect our students to act in the best interests of the Wesley community; comply with the Laws of NSW and Australia and our own Policies; behave responsibly; actively seek to ensure the safety of others; and display respect for others at all times. We have zero tolerance for antisocial behaviour of any kind.

### ***Confidential Disclosures***

Students may make confidential disclosures to the Master of the College or any member of the Pastoral Care team (This includes two Harassment Officers and the Chaplain/Counsellor). We have an Harassment Policy in place which outlines clearly the grievance procedures and available options for students. In the event the matter cannot be dealt with satisfactorily within the College, there are mechanisms within the policy to involve an external investigator and an opportunity to refer the matter to the University.

### ***Disciplinary Policy***

Disciplinary measures within the College are at the sole discretion of the Master. In 2012 the College Council approved a Discipline Policy to provide transparency with respect to the principles which will be applied and to provide clarity to students about the nature of disciplinary actions available to the Master.

Disciplinary actions include:

*Warning*

A warning to the student that he or she is engaging in misconduct by violating College By-Laws, rules, regulations or policies and that continuation or repetition of misconduct may result in more severe sanctions.

*Restitution*

Restitution is a requirement to reimburse or otherwise compensate another for damage or loss of property resulting from a student's misconduct. This includes individual responsibility as well as group responsibility. This may be required in conjunction with other sanctions, depending on circumstances of the particular situation. Failure to make restitution as directed is a serious disciplinary matter.

*Fine*

A fine may be issued in relation to inappropriate behaviour or breaches of the Act, By-Laws or rules and regulations of the College. This fine is to be paid to the College within 14 days of it being issued. This may be required in conjunction with other sanctions, depending on circumstances of the particular situation. Failure to pay a fine as directed is a serious disciplinary matter.

*Probation*

Probation relates specifically to Academic Progress. If a student is not able to demonstrate at least pass grades in all subjects, he or she will be placed on Academic Probation for a period of one semester, allowing time to demonstrate significant progress.

*Suspension*

Suspension involves termination of residential student status at the College for a specified time period. Suspension does not mean automatic return to College at its conclusion. Suspension may be lifted, extended or expulsion may occur.

*Expulsion*

Expulsion involves termination of residential status at the College permanently. This requires a student to vacate the premises by a specific date and not to return to Wesley College or attend any events associated with the College for a predetermined time frame.

*Complaints and Investigations*

In 2013 the College received five complaints, categorised as follows:

Wesley student	1
Wesley Staff or Contractor	0
Other Colleges	1
University staff or students	0
Members of the public	2
Media	1

All complaints were investigated and appropriate actions taken. Two complaints were noise complaints which were rectified simply. In one incidence in 2013 the complaint was found to be vexatious and withdrawn in writing to the University by the complainant.

Various media outlets made allegations in late March/ April 2013 about alleged sexist and intimidatory behaviour during the 2013 Orientation Week held in early March 2013. These allegations were referred for external investigation and the External Investigator (Ms Christie Breakspear) concluded:

*"In my view, on the balance of probabilities and on the basis of information before me, each of the four allegations is **not proven.**"*

## *Serious Disciplinary Actions*

In 2013, the following serious disciplinary actions were taken:

Fine	0
Suspension	2
Expulsion	3

## ***Academic Assistance and Achievement***

Wesley is an academic community, in which education and learning are supported and encouraged. Satisfactory academic progression is required of all students.

Wesley offers students the chance to live amongst their peers, many of whom may be completing the same course, and also provides an evening program of over 20 tutorials per week, in addition to the University itself, which is included in the fees and available to all College students.

Wesley has a reputation for academic excellence, producing 6 Rhodes Scholars over the last ten years. In 2013 the academic achievements of our students included five students graduating with Class 1 Honours, five students achieving a High Distinction average for the year, with a further thirty two achieving a Distinction average and five students awarded University Prizes. In 2013 the College awarded prizes to individual students totaling \$6,850 (2012: \$6,850) for academic achievement.

As well as celebrating our high academic achievers, we also take great pride in assisting others in their studies and seek to identify those who may be struggling early and offer assistance and support. This program, entitled, *'Back on Track'*, has successfully been used to identify issues with study patterns, incorrect subject choices and assist with planning. It also provides students struggling with their study an opportunity to work with a mentor and make progress a priority.

Failure to pass two or more subjects is grounds for non readmission. However we acknowledge that sometimes discretion must be exercised in extenuating circumstances. We seek to apply such discretion in a caring manner based on each student's individual circumstances, and based on the advice of the Pastoral Care Team.

In 2012 seven students were ineligible for 2013 readmission based on our academic progression requirements. At the end of 2013, four students were ineligible for readmission.

## ***Commitment to Appropriate Supervision and Pastoral Care***

### *Supervision of an Adult Living Community*

Appropriate supervision in an adult living community involves providing clear guidance on what is and what isn't appropriate behaviour, and where necessary taking action, including disciplinary action, to moderate behaviours. We do not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying or intimidation.

Each year we welcome students from a variety of places and backgrounds. This generation of young men and women arrive at Wesley already shaped by an early introduction to alcohol, unprecedented exposure to privacy issues and bombarded by the sexualisation of women from a young age. These are society issues which we must manage, and influence, in an adult living community.

The Master and her team work with a cohort of young adults fresh from High School; often living away from home for the first time; and of legal drinking age. This is a generation that receives constant media coverage about binge drinking and consequent anti social behaviour. This is also a generation whose role models are

sporting heroes and celebrities, whose inappropriate exploits we see published almost daily in the media. To further complicate their lives, social media consumes their attention and most are unprepared for the privacy issues which can emerge and potentially impact their future working lives.

#### *Responsible Service of Alcohol*

In 2013 the College Council updated the Alcohol Policy. All organised events held within the College that involve the majority of the College are licensed events, conducted under one of our two licenses, held by Scolarest (our caterer) and Wesley College Students' Club. All events involving alcohol service within the College are managed through an application process and ongoing discussion between The Students' Club and Master. Security is employed for all major events and a log book of incidents is maintained by both Licensees. Both Licensees are members of the Sydney University Liquor Accord.

#### *Pastoral Care*

One of the key indicators of the problems faced by these young men and women entering adulthood surrounded by these widespread societal problems is the growing pressure we are experiencing to provide a greater level of pastoral care and counseling services. We currently employ a pastoral care specialist 2.5 days per week, but her capacity to keep pace with the demand for her services is increasingly stretched. In any one year, there are around 45-50 students seeking assistance from the Chaplain, either for special consideration or ongoing matters related to their personal well being. Students are often referred as part of the discipline procedure for follow up with the Chaplain, especially if their actions are out of character. The College has a Pastoral Care Team, consisting of 5 members of staff who meet fortnightly to assess and track student's welfare within the College.

#### ***Commitment to Sustainability***

##### *Heritage Buildings*

We are committed to ensuring the proper maintenance of our beautiful, heritage buildings. Any extension or refurbishment of our property must be done in an architecturally sympathetic and financially viable way, and such that all residents must be able to be accommodated in the Dining Hall in one sitting.

Early in 2012 we completed the rejuvenation of the foyer, creation of new tutorial rooms and improvements in the Reg Walker Room. In April 2012 renovation of the Courtyard was completed, delivering modern facilities for social activities and a welcoming, casual space for relaxing. The improvements include a magnificent staircase which links the Courtyard, Junior Common Room and the Library terrace for the first time.

In November 2013, after a twelve month construction period, a third floor extension to the Purser Wing was successfully completed. This is the first building program the College has undertaken in the past 45 years, with the last building, New Wing, welcoming our first female residents in 1969. The new extension has cleverly worked in sympathy with our current building to create a seamless addition, which complements the original building features. The extension provides 40 new rooms, including 8 ensuite rooms and the creation of an Academic Centre on the ground floor in a clever re-use of a maintenance and storage area. This extension also delivers enhanced fire safety for the Purser Wing.

Funding for repairs, maintenance, refurbishment and extensions is provided from a combination of operating surpluses, building fund donations to the Wesley College Foundation and, where applicable, long term loan facilities from Uniting Financial Services.

In 2012 the Wesley College Foundation received \$32,250 (2012: \$172,818) in general donations for building purposes; and \$639,336 in response to the Purser *Raising the Roof* Appeal, with further monies pledged over coming years.

### *Financial Viability*

Financially the College was again well managed in 2013, reporting a net surplus of \$ 332,364 (2012: \$751,762). This was a particularly pleasing result in a year of construction activity which resulted in considerably lower student numbers and reflects the excellent work of the Master and her team to improve out of academic period income generation. The College invested a total of \$5,077,218 (2012: \$1,595,815) into capital extensions and improvements, and spent \$280,036 (2012: \$245,747) on repairs and maintenance.

### *Sustainability*

LED lighting has been installed throughout the new floor in Purser, as well as timers to increase our energy efficiency. In 2014, we will move to provide recycling of rubbish in all areas of the building, beginning with Purser.

### ***Commitment to Scholarships for those in Financial Need***

Wesley has a long standing tradition of providing scholarship assistance to young men and women who “*but for the scholarship*” would otherwise not be able to study at The University of Sydney. Very limited additional scholarship assistance is offered to students on Sports Scholarships awarded by the University.

Our most prestigious scholarship is the Greatorex Scholarship, which provides \$10,000 per annum for up to four years to our most outstanding all round students. We have up to four students on this scholarship at any one time. We also offer a number of Scholarships for indigenous students.

In total seventeen “need” scholarships and seven “sporting” scholarships were awarded in 2013 at a total cost of \$145,820 (2012: \$202,948). In 2013 the Wesley College Foundation received \$273,138 (2012: \$210,295) in donations for scholarship purposes.

### ***Commitment to Continuous Improvement***

The College Council is committed to continuous improvement through periodic review and updating of the College By Laws; regular review and promulgation of Policies for both staff and students; training and development of staff; training and development of our Student Leaders and Residential Assistants; and other initiatives to ensure we stay abreast of changes in society, such as technological advances, which impact the University and our resident students.

In 2012/13 the Council:

- updated the College Bylaws to ensure representation of both male and female students on the Council;
- updated the College Bylaws to give effect to a right of appeal for expelled students;
- formulated and approved a new Vision/Mission/Values Statement; and
- approved some new Policies and updated other Policies, including the Admission, Discipline, Social Media and Alcohol Policies;

In 2012/13 training and development activities for students included:

- opportunity for all new students to complete an RSA certificate in Semester 1;
- training in Harrassment for all Senior Leaders of the College involved in O Week activities and ongoing leadership positions, provided by an external consultant;
- Sexual Harrassment Seminar for all new students to the College, provided by an external consultant;
- Drug and alcohol seminar provided by an external consultant;
- in House training program, involving Leadership training, decision making and personal choices;
- First Aid course with certificate, for all Resident Assistants and key staff;
- Mental Health First Aid with certificate for all Resident Assistants; and
- attendance at NAAUC Conference for House Committee potential leaders.

### ***Commitment to our Association with the Uniting Church***

The College and its community have a commitment to maintain the traditions associated with Wesley College as a Uniting Church College. Throughout the year, we have a number of special celebrations to mark the occasions of *Welcome to new families*, *Salvete*, *Parents Weekend*, and *Valete*. These significant events involve a chapel service and provide an opportunity to showcase the musical talents of our students. We have an active bible study group who meet weekly within College.

The Master and Chair of Council work with the Education Board of the Uniting Church and attend regular meetings with other education facilities within the Church network to keep an open flow of communication and ideas. Wesley College Council includes the Executive Director of the NSW Synod's Board of Education (ex officio); two Synod elected positions; and four Church Members, elected by the Old Collegians.

### ***Commitment to our Wider Community***

2013 saw the 21<sup>st</sup> year of our Overseas Study Experience (OSE) in Indochina. This is a program that is unmatched by other Colleges on this campus and shows a deep commitment to our outreach into the communities in need in both Vietnam and Cambodia. Each year, six students are chosen and for the first time in 2013, were given a scholarship, through the Wesley College Foundation to complete their work and study projects during an eight week placement period.

The two key organisations we raise money for are 'Project Indochina' and 'SCADP' and we have been supporting these not for profit organisations for a number of years now. We also sponsor a young girl, Pan, now 15 years old, paying for her education and boarding school fees. Wesley Students raise money to support these two charities throughout the year by holding events and providing awareness of the difficulties facing young children in these two countries. In 2013, a dinner was held in April to highlight the work of our students in 2012/13 and our guest speaker was the Director of the South East Asian Centre at Sydney University.

Currently, the Master of Wesley College serves as Chair of the Heads of Colleges Committee at The University of Sydney. This role ensures strong connections and communications between the Colleges' management. This group meets three times per year with the Vice Chancellor, as part of the SEG CCC group, providing a conduit with the University for discussion around shared matters of interest and concern.





### **Contact Us**

Enquiries regarding this Report can be made to:

The Master  
Mrs Lisa J Sutherland  
Wesley College  
Western Ave  
University of Sydney NSW 2006  
Telephone: 02 95653377  
Email: [lsutherland@wesleycollege-usyd.edu.au](mailto:lsutherland@wesleycollege-usyd.edu.au)



## **Wesley College**

*A Residential College within the University of Sydney*

### **Our Vision**

*To be the University of Sydney's most respected Residential College and to be known as the place where students flourish and lifelong connections are forged.*

### **Our Mission**

As a Residential College of the Uniting Church within the University of Sydney, we seek to:

- Foster a vibrant community of learning and personal growth;
- Provide a safe environment which encourages and promotes the academic, social, sporting, cultural and spiritual growth of each individual;
- Assist students develop qualities and values that will be modeled in their everyday life and;
- Sustain the College into the future.

### **At Wesley we:**

#### **Value our Community**

We actively participate in College Life.

We respect and support each other as Collegians.

We act responsibly, and actively seek to ensure the safety of others.

We are known for our positive College Spirit.

We honour the heritage and traditions associated with the College's foundation.

#### **Value the Individual**

We display respect to others.

We accept responsibility.

We strive to be the best we can be.

#### **Value Achievement**

We pursue our studies with enthusiasm and endeavour.

We set goals and strive to achieve them.

We recognise achievement comes in many guises.

We celebrate success, but value effort and contribution more.

#### **Value Inclusiveness**

We actively seek to include our fellow Collegians in College Life.

We value diversity of gender, background and thought.

We actively seek to promote equity of access.