

Cultural Renewal at the University of Sydney Residential Colleges

Contents

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Message from Elizabeth Broderick

The residential Colleges at the University of Sydney are among the oldest in the country. Each has a long and distinguished history of supporting young people as they undertake tertiary studies, supporting students to achieve academic excellence and personal growth, and offering opportunities for sporting and cultural pursuits. The Colleges have produced many distinguished alumni, women and men who have served the nation at the highest levels across different fields and disciplines.

Over the past year, at the invitation of the College Heads and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, my team and I have conducted a thorough independent review of the current culture of each of the Colleges – St Andrew’s College, St John’s College, Sancta Sophia College, Wesley College and the Women’s College. We have met with over 600 College students and surveyed over a thousand. We have consulted with key College staff as well as alumni and reviewed the relevant policies and processes of each of the Colleges. We have undertaken extensive research to identify best practice approaches from both Australia and internationally.

We have identified the great strengths of College life but also areas that require strengthening and renewal. I commend the Colleges for the commitment and courage they have shown in shining a light on all aspects of College culture, despite this being at times uncomfortable. The College leadership have strongly supported the Project and I now encourage them to start the important task of implementing the Project’s recommendations. This will be critical in ensuring that the Colleges remain strong now and into the future.

I want to thank the many students who participated in our discussion groups or chose to speak to a team member individually. Telling personal stories requires courage. Yet many students have done so, rightly believing that this will make their College stronger and a more inclusive institution for all. Students’ views and insights into the many positive aspects of College life, as well as what needs to change, have been captured and reproduced in their own words throughout this report and in the reports of individual Colleges. The extent of our discussions and the strong response rate to our Survey is clear testament to the students’ desire to have their voices heard.

I want to thank the Vice-Chancellor, the College Heads, Councils, staff and student leaders for their genuine commitment to the Project. All were open and honest in their desire to create outstanding, inclusive and safe institutions where the well-being of young people sits at the heart of change.



The findings in this report should in no way reduce the confidence of the community in the residential Colleges. Rather this and the individual Colleges' reports serve as a record that the Colleges are genuinely committed to cultural renewal and to ensuring that these institutions are places where all students can thrive.

By embracing our recommendations, the College experience will be enhanced, not only for those who reside at College now, but for all those who will call College home in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. Broderick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'E' and 'B'.

Elizabeth Broderick AO

Sydney
29 November 2017

*I have loved my time at College. I have challenged myself and been challenged.
I want College to be a place where everyone can have a positive time, like myself. If
we need to change parts of the culture to make sure this happens, then I am all for it...
We need to be a place for everyone, not just for certain groups.*

– College Student

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Project purpose

In October 2016, Elizabeth Broderick and Co ('EB & Co') was engaged by the University of Sydney (the 'University'), St Andrew's College, St John's College, Sancta Sophia College, Wesley College and the Women's College (the 'Colleges') to undertake an examination of culture. Specifically, EB & Co was asked to comprehensively evaluate the strengths and challenges of residential life at the participating Colleges and to make recommendations in areas requiring renewal or reform.

To do this, the Project Team from EB & Co (the 'Project Team') sought to understand the great strengths of College life: the sense of community; the academic excellence that inspires students; the pastoral care; the extracurricular activities; the building of deep and lasting friendships; and the networking opportunities and connection to College alumni. The Project Team also sought to identify those areas of culture that may need strengthening or renewal. For example, how easy it is to fit in? What are the traditions and are they still relevant? What part does alcohol play? Does an individual have to be a particular type of person to succeed? How are College students treated by the broader University community? What are the experiences of students in engaging and socialising with residents at other Colleges? How safe is the College? Are there incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault?

In those areas identified as requiring further action, strong recommendations for reform have been made.

The Project Team received strong support from each College Council Chair, the College Heads, their Executive Teams, and the student leaders who championed the Project and were critical in ensuring students and staff were fully engaged.

The Report provides an independent assessment of the current culture within each College together with recommendations for future targeted individual and collective action. The recommendations build on the promising individual cultural change initiatives already underway in each of the Colleges.

A key finding of the Project Team is that for the majority of students, their experience of College is rewarding and positive – one that enriches their overall University experience. Common themes were students' deep sense of belonging, their access to academic support and pastoral care, and the opportunities for involvement in a range of extracurricular and affiliate activities. Importantly, students who spoke to the Project Team stated that College was a place where they made firm friendships. The Project Team found that these strengths of College life have been further enhanced by the changes all of the Colleges have made in recent years to enhance their culture. Strong efforts have been made to create more inclusive environments, to minimise risk and to ensure that all students have an opportunity to thrive.

For any organisation to evolve and remain relevant, refining institutional culture and identifying its impact on members is critical. Practices, traditions and customs that have served an organisation well in the past may no longer be consistent with contemporary community expectations and standards and so require reform or, on occasion, elimination. The reforms already initiated by the Colleges demonstrate that they are acutely aware of the need for organisations to renew and evolve. As one student stated:

I'm happy the Colleges are undertaking this review. There's always room for improvement. I hope it will minimise harmful behaviour across all Colleges.

Changing culture requires both individual and collective action – action by Councils, staff and student leaders, and action by a united intercollege community, with strong support from the University. Areas identified by the Project Team for further action include: student leadership, student hierarchy, the place of alcohol, safety (both psychological and physical), and whether the Colleges are safe reporting environments.

The Project has been undertaken at an important time for Australian tertiary institutions, as universities and colleges across the country are focusing efforts on ensuring the safety, respect and well-being of students. This Project represents one of the first in Australia to examine and respond to these issues specifically in the context of university residential colleges. To that end, the five Colleges and the University of Sydney are leaders in this area, and it is hoped that this Report and its recommendations will serve as a blueprint for other colleges, in Australia and abroad.

1.2 Project approach

I feel like we were really listened to and we all got a say.

– College Student

The findings and recommendations contained in this report are underpinned by evidence obtained from both qualitative and quantitative data. Data from an online survey ('the Survey'), discussion groups, one-on-one interviews with College students, staff and recent alumni, a review of academic literature, and a review of the Colleges' own policies and statistics, as well as advice from staff and student leaders, have all contributed to building a substantial evidence base for this Project.

As part of its evidence gathering, the Project Team captured the views and experiences of a significant proportion of the Colleges' community. All participation in the Project was voluntary and the diversity of opportunities to contribute to the Project allowed students a choice as to how they engaged. It also ensured students could be involved in the Project on a confidential basis.

A. Discussion groups and interviews

The Project Team spoke to 632 students and recent alumni across the five Colleges:

- During 2016 and 2017, 43 discussion groups were held with students across each of the 5 Colleges with over 573 students participating in these discussions across:
 - » First, second, third and fourth years
 - » Postgraduate students
 - » Members of the Student Leadership teams
 - » Resident Assistants and their equivalents
 - » Particular population groups (e.g. the LGBTIQ+ support group).
- 35 one-on-one confidential interviews were held with current students, and a further 7 confidential submissions were received from current students. In addition, 16 one-on-one interviews were held with recent alumni, and 1 confidential submission was received from a recent alumni. These interviews were held at the specific request of participants.

The Project Team also met regularly with senior staff across each of the Colleges as well as with the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and other senior staff of the University of Sydney.

In the discussion groups, facilitators were guided by a series of structured questions designed to explore themes relevant to the scope of the Project. This process was also flexible, allowing issues of interest or importance to the group, or newly identified issues, to be explored.

Participants were made aware that any statements made by them and used in this report would be de-identified.

This report reflects the observations and experiences of students as told to the Project Team. It also incorporates the views and experience and proposals for reform by senior staff.

Of note: The Project Team conducted a broad review of culture and as such did not investigate or make findings about any individual incident or allegation made by individual students.

B. Presentations

A total of 17 presentations on the Project were given by Elizabeth Broderick or members of the Project Team to the College Councils and to staff and students at their Formal Dinners.

C. Survey

An online survey (the 'Survey') was administered to all students over the age of 18 years (n=1447) across the five residential Colleges between 18 May and 9 June 2017. The Survey instrument was developed in collaboration with the College Heads and the Social Research Centre, a leading research institution affiliated with the Australian National University. The Social Research Centre also performed all analysis of the Survey data.

Approval to administer the Survey was sought and granted by the University of Sydney Human Ethics Committee (Ethics Approval Number: 2017/234). See Appendix A for further details on the methodology of the Survey.

The Survey attracted a 69% response rate, with a total of 1001 students completing the Survey.¹ Students who participated in the Survey and in discussion forums were provided with contact details for relevant referral and support services.

¹ The response rate was defined as the number of interviews (i.e. Survey responses) divided by the total number of students invited to take part.

The aim of the Survey was to gather quantitative data on perceptions and experiences of students on a range of areas related to College life, including the strengths of College life, and areas they find challenging. It also aimed to understand the prevalence of inappropriate behaviour, sexual harassment and bullying, and any patterns in the experience of particular groups of students, for example women and first-year students.

The Survey provided an alternative avenue for College students to engage with the Project and confidentially report on their views and experiences.

The Survey built upon existing survey instruments including the *National Sexual Harassment* survey (NSH Survey),² *Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities (Respect Now Always survey)*³ and the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Personal Safety Survey*.⁴ However, due to the different population bases and variations in survey methodology, the results cannot be compared to these other surveys. See Appendix B for the Survey questionnaire.

The Survey responses were weighted to ensure they reflected and were representative of the College student population in all five Colleges including by gender, undergraduate or postgraduate status and year at College. Statistically significant differences between different groups of students (e.g. men and women) are reported throughout this report.

It is important to note that the statistical data presented in this report is the **aggregated** Survey results of the five Colleges. The specific Survey results for each individual College have been provided to each College, including statistically significant differences between the Survey results for their College and the aggregate findings, and are summarised in their individual reports.

D. College documentation and literature reviews

The Project Team requested and received documentation and information from each College, including policies, strategies and various other data. The Project Team also undertook literature reviews in a number of key areas which underpin the findings and inform the recommendations.

The following chapters identify the key themes and findings of the Project.

2 Australian Human Rights Commission 2012, *Working Without Fear: Results of the Sexual Harassment National Telephone Survey*, Australian Government.

3 Australian Human Rights Commission 2017, *Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities*, Australian Government.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012, *4906.0 – Personal Safety, Australia, 2012*, Australian Government.

College is great for the leadership opportunities it gives you... There's... House Committee... sport secretary positions, Palladian representatives... It gives you a great platform.

– College Student

Chapter 2: Leadership

A three-tiered leadership model operates at each of the Colleges – staff, the Council and the leadership of students. The importance of all three tiers is noted by former Warden of Rhodes House, Oxford, Dr Don Markwell, who stated:

Colleges will work best, and students will gain most, if leaders at all levels – student leaders, administration leaders, governance leaders – work together, respectful of each other, towards a shared vision of their college as the best that it can be, in which students are encouraged and supported to be the best that they can be.⁵

It is critical that all three tiers visibly commit to the next phase of the cultural renewal journey, as they demonstrated when committing to involvement in this Project.

An aim of the staff and student leadership model is to maximise collaboration between these tiers and to ensure that students are closely involved in shaping their College experience. The Colleges are headed variously by a Principal, Rector or Master (collectively referred to in this report as College Head), all of whom are supported by an Executive Team. Students are led by an elected leadership team.

The following discussion explores staff and student leadership in the context of cultural renewal.

2.1 Leadership – staff

College staff have a critical leadership role in shaping College culture and creating and sustaining a values-based community. As elaborated below, while the Project Team supports strong student leadership in the College, the Project Team believes this will only be successful when it is exercised within an environment that has clear and common values based on respect and inclusion. Active leadership by staff, in addition to their involvement in the day-to-day management of students, is important in articulating and modelling the shared values of the community.

The Project Team notes that there have been a number of changes instituted by College Heads regarding leadership. Changes include greater accountability of students who behave unacceptably; a decrease in the duration of and stricter rules around orientation weeks (O Weeks); and greater staff support in the appointment of elected student leaders, to minimise risk to students and prevent abuses of power within a student hierarchy.

⁵ Markwell, D 2012, *Leadership in Colleges*. Centre for Leadership, King's College, University of Queensland, 17 September, p. 2

Cultural renewal and reform in any organisation takes time and can be challenging, particularly where there are deep-seated traditions and conventions. Strong, committed and courageous leadership underpins any successful cultural renewal process. As Astin and Astin state:

*Leadership is a process that is ultimately concerned with fostering change...in contrast to the notion of 'management' which suggests preservation or maintenance.*⁶

In the context of the Colleges, it is imperative for the staff leadership to be supported by the student leadership in the cultural renewal process. Student leaders have a significant role to play in the change process and, along with staff leaders, must own and champion cultural renewal.

Successful involvement of students in any change to leadership models or the way in which they carry out their role requires staff to ensure that the reasons for any change are clearly communicated, including the benefits to individual students and to the College community as a whole.

The Project Team heard many views and ideas about the relationship between the staff and student leadership. Staff and student leaders should work collaboratively, but the ultimate decision-making on the welfare of students should lie with the Council, the College Heads and, in appropriate cases, other staff.

To reinforce the leadership position of staff, the Project Team suggests that for those Colleges where the staff are collectively referred to as 'Admin', the nomenclature be changed to Executive or Management. This would send a strong symbolic message about the importance of staff and students as leaders.

2.2 Leadership – students

A strong and positive feature of the Colleges is the opportunity for students to gain leadership skills and experience through the many formal and informal leadership opportunities. Students are empowered to make a range of decisions impacting on the culture and life of the College. According to Black et al., empowering students and giving them significant agency in decision-making and event management is critical to the development of their leadership capabilities.⁷ The Project Team supports this view but, given that students are still in a period of learning how to lead effectively, it believes that they need guidance and direction.

2.2.1 House Committee, House Executive, Senior Common Room

The Students' Club is the representative body for College residents. The management of the Students' Club is vested in an elected group of student leaders known as the House Committee. Each member of the leadership group has a role ranging from Senior Student/House President to first-year, or 'fresher', representative.

The House Committee includes a 'House Executive' which consists of the Senior Student or House President, House Secretary and House Treasurer. A large postgraduate population exists at Sancta Sophia College, which has a student leadership body, separate to the House Committee, known as the Senior Common Room. It is led by the Senior Common Room President.

While some positions on the House Committee require gender balance (e.g. male and female fresher representatives), there is no such provision for the Senior Student/House President. This is also the case for the Senior Common Room. In co-educational/co-residential Colleges, very few female students have occupied senior leadership positions.

⁶ Astin, W & Astin, H 2000, *Leadership Reconsidered: Engaging Higher Education in Social Change*, p. 18

⁷ Black, R, Walsh, L, Magee, J, Hutchins, L, Berman, N & Groundwater-Smith, S 2014, *Student leadership: a review of effective practice*. Canberra: ARACY.

The online Survey conducted as part of this Project revealed that 77% of College students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel supported by my student leaders,' a strong result. Student commentary also reflected this. For example:

I always felt really supported by the...leaders. They are friendly and not intimidating at all.

I think we are really lucky with the leaders we have here.

Male students were significantly more likely to agree that they felt supported by student leaders (83%) than their female counterparts (75%).

Student leaders themselves commented on their roles and responsibilities. For example:

This year we want to carry on the care and support for new students to beyond O Week.

Everything we do is focused on the safety of students.

While generally positive about the leadership qualities of the student leaders, a theme emerged in co-educational/co-residential Colleges that very few women had been elected to the most senior roles:

We should...be promoting diversity and trying to make sure that the leaders reflect the students, meaning both guys and girls.

The fresher group last year was huge, and they have huge voting power, and there were still girls that went for a position, and then...[more] boys still got voted in.

The Project Team was impressed by the student leaders it engaged with. Far from being uninterested, the student leaders demonstrated a strong commitment to cultural renewal. The Project Team recognises, however, the vast body of literature which shows that gender-diverse leadership teams across a range of organisations deliver tangible organisational benefits and positive outcomes. This includes evidence which shows that more gender-diverse organisations and leadership teams:

- Are able to attract and retain the best possible talent and potential.
- Are able to innovate and adapt in a fast-changing environment.
- Have enhanced performance and productivity.
- Have diversity of thought, ideas and, as a result, better decision-making.⁸

Given that women comprise approximately half of the students in co-educational/co-residential Colleges, the Project Team believes that some intervention to ensure greater opportunities for gender-diverse teams should be included in the student leadership model and governance. It is important that the leaders reflect the diversity of the group they lead.

A 40:40:20 model is one that a number of organisations have adopted to ensure that there is good gender balance in leadership. The basis of this model is that 40% of the leaders are men, 40% are women and 20% are either gender. This model, known as a 'gender-neutral target', enables gender diversity at leadership levels and allows for a diversity of views and thought, a key element for good leadership and decision-making. Without a diverse leadership group, co-educational/co-residential Colleges are at risk of not accessing the best talent for leadership roles. It is important to recognise that setting a target for gender balance is not inconsistent with merit. Indeed, as stated in a letter co-signed by the organisation, Chief Executive Women, and the coalition, Male Champions of Change:

...adhering to an un-interrogated idea of merit means there is no examination of biases, and it reinforces the idea that gender inequality is about supply side problems rather than demand. So organisations miss out on the best talent and are fishing in an ever smaller pool of candidates – a pool that fails to reflect the community our organisations serve. If we continue to define 'merit' as people 'like us' who have done what we did, we will get more of the same.⁹

8 See, for example, McKinsey & Company 2016, *Why Women Matter 2016: Reinventing the Workplace to unlock the potential of gender diversity*. Accessed 12 Nov 2017, <https://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/gender-equality/reinventing-the-workplace-for-greater-gender-diversity>.

9 Male Champions of Change 2016, *In The Eye of The Beholder: Avoiding the Merit Trap*. Accessed 1 August 2017, <http://malechampionsofchange.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/MCC-CEW-Merit-Paper-FINAL.pdf>.

The Project Team believes that over time, a gender balance of student leadership teams will be achieved in co-educational/co-residential Colleges, including by implementing a 40:40:20 rule for House Executive and House Committee. In addition, the Project Team suggests that the role of Senior Student,¹⁰ House President,¹¹ and Senior Common Room President¹² rotates on an equitable basis between male and female students.

Student leaders have considerable influence over the student body. What they do and say matters. The Project Team supports the empowerment of students to step up as leaders in their College. Among other things, leadership positions teach young adults about ethical decision-making, how to negotiate within a team and set positive examples for others. There are times when student leaders need greater support from senior staff to make optimal decisions. In this regard, the Project Team notes that academic literature refers to 18 to 24-year-olds as ‘emerging adults’ or ‘transitional age youth,’¹³ an age when young people transition from adolescence to adults. According to some researchers, over time, this transition has lengthened and become less standardised.¹⁴ Significantly, science tells us that the rational part of an individual’s brain, which controls reasoning and decision-making, is not fully developed until approximately 24 years of age.¹⁵

The Project Team believes that there are areas within the current system of student selection and the exercise of student authority which can be strengthened to ensure that leadership is exercised properly and maturely. Examples of best practice student leadership are identified below.

2.2.2 Deans, Sub-Deans, Resident Advisers, Resident Assistants and Corridor Representatives

Deans, Sub-Deans, Corridor Representatives, Resident Assistants and Resident Advisers [hereafter collectively referred to as RAs] play a critical role in advising and supporting students. They can often be the first point of contact for students who need assistance and support across a range of areas. The role of an RA includes assisting students with minor issues such as unlocking rooms to more serious matters including mental health issues or sexual assault.

RAs make valuable contributions to ensuring that students are supported during their time at College. One student summed up their value as follows:

Students feel more comfortable talking to another student with some College experience, than say admin or a staff member.

A theme emerging in discussion groups was that because RAs are students themselves living among their peers, they have a deeper awareness than staff of issues impacting day to day on students. They are therefore able to identify and reach out to students who may be struggling with academic studies or College life, isolating themselves, or drinking excessively.

The Project Team was impressed by the deep sense of responsibility and concern demonstrated by RAs across all of the Colleges. They demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring that all students, and freshers in particular, feel comfortable coming to them for assistance and for providing those students with appropriate support. Students commented:

I actually find that the team is really, really supportive. They are there if you need them.

My RA has been so supportive. She checks in on me from time to time, so it’s not like I have to have a problem just to have contact with her.

The students and RAs at [my College] are amazing and so supportive. I’ve never felt more accepted and safe with them.

10 St Andrew’s College and Wesley College.

11 St John’s College.

12 Sancta Sophia College, Postgraduates.

13 Martel, A & Fuchs, DC (eds) 2017, *Transitional Age Youth and Mental Illness – Influences on Young Adult Outcomes*, Elsevier – Health Sciences Division.

14 Leebens, P & Williamson, E 2017, ‘Developmental Psychopathology: Risk and Resilience in the Transition to Young Adulthood’, *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics*, Volume 26, Issue 2, pp. 143–156.

15 Arain, M, Haque, M, Johal, L, Mathur, P, Nel, W, Rais, A, Sandhu, R & Sharma, S 2013, ‘Maturation of the adolescent brain’, *Neuropsychiatr Dis Treat.* 9, pp. 449–461.

Across each of the Colleges, RAs themselves spoke of their strong commitment to the role but also, its demands and sometimes emotional impacts. For example:

I wanted to give back to the College and this allows me to do that.

I had such a great RA and I guess I felt inspired to be one.

I certainly don't think it's a job you take on lightly...but even still I don't think [you are aware of] how big it would be.

There are moments when it is quite a challenging role.

I think a lot gets dumped on [us].

Similar models for peer assistance exist in colleges across the nation and internationally. In her study, 'Keepers of the Night: The Dangerously Important Role of Resident Assistants on College and University Campuses', Letarte notes that RAs are the 'eyes and ears' of the institution and simultaneously fulfil the roles of a student, role model, counsellor, teacher and administrator.¹⁶ She argues that the occasionally serious issues to which RAs frequently respond, including mental health concerns, alcohol-related issues and sexual assault:

...make the RA role seem more akin to that of a professional's or first responder's.¹⁷

Sharkin, Plageman and Mangold also found that RAs may find themselves assisting students with mental health issues, academic-related difficulties, relationship issues and substance abuse. The authors state that:

Even though resources are available, including on-campus counselling, the findings from this study suggest that most students may choose to consult with another student or perhaps a family member, rather than someone who might be in a better position to assist the troubled individual. This is not to say that students cannot be helpful to their peers, for the proliferation of peer counseling and education programs is based on the fact that peer intervention can be quite effective. But there certainly may be instances where students 'get in over their heads' when trying to help peers.¹⁸

The study raises questions about how much responsibility students, including RAs, should assume for the welfare of their peers:

...particularly on an emotional level (e.g. worrying, feeling stressed, etc.). How much are students willing to tolerate before contacting a staff or faculty member on campus?¹⁹

Paladino et al. report that:

RAs have a multidimensional job that includes several roles and responsibilities. These...sometimes leave them cognizant of their role 24 hours a day.²⁰

The authors suggest that this makes RAs more susceptible to increased levels of burnout and emotional stress. To mitigate against this, they suggest that professional staff:

...can learn how to develop a working environment that reduces the susceptibility to burnout. In addition, they can be trained to assist RAs experiencing burnout at the individual level.²¹

16 Letarte, C 2013, 'Keepers of the Night: The Dangerously Important Role of Resident Assistants on College and University Campuses', *Kentucky Journal of Higher Education Policy and Practice*, Volume 2, Issue 2, December, p. 5.

17 *ibid.*, p. 24.

18 Sharkin, B, Plageman, P & Mangold, S 2003, 'College student response to peers in distress: An exploratory study', *Journal of College Student Development*, 44, p. 695.

19 *ibid.*, p. 696.

20 Paladino, D, Murray, T, Newgent, R & Gohn, L 2005, 'Resident Assistant Burnout: Factors Impacting Depersonalization, Emotional Exhaustion, and Personal Accomplishment' *Journal of College and University Student Housing*, Vol 33, No 2, p. 25. Accessed 17 November 2017, <http://www.units.miamioh.edu/saf/reslife/reslife/manuals/edl301old/EDL377/Articles/Resident%20Assistant%20Burnout.pdf>.

21 *ibid.*

While acknowledging the benefits of students supporting other students, the Project Team considers that the limited technical expertise of the RAs and the responsibilities of providing support for peers can be substantial. RAs' age, their level of life experience, and their lack of professional experience in dealing with sometimes complex issues, including mental health issues and sexual assault, can place significant pressure on them and potentially take an emotional toll.

The Project Team notes that Colleges offer assistance, including debriefings for RAs but believes that this can be enhanced, particularly in relation to the more serious matters to which they are required to respond. Access to a proper support system for RAs would help to minimise the risk of vicarious trauma.

2.2.3 Student hierarchy

Student hierarchies (beyond formal leadership roles) are a common feature across many residential colleges, both in Australia and overseas, and generally involve seniority and power increasing as people progress through year levels.

A hierarchy operates largely by way of convention or through an unspoken and accepted set of rules or process rather than by formal rules which define it.

Student hierarchies are understood as cultivating respect for those with experience but on occasion can include conventions that may seem unusual or outdated to outsiders (e.g. the requirement in some Colleges that first years have strictly designated seating in the dining hall that is separate from other years.)

In certain situations, they can also create an environment where those at the bottom of the hierarchy can feel intimidated by those at the top.

While elements of a student hierarchy exist in each of the Colleges, there have been strengthened efforts, to varying degrees, to dismantle some of its negative aspects.

Hierarchy and student power was explored in the Survey. 11% of surveyed students agreed or strongly agreed that 'student leaders have too much power over other students'. Women were significantly more likely to agree or disagree with this statement (15%) compared to men (4%).²²

The Project Team understands that a student hierarchy can manifest itself in a number of ways. In O Week, those first years who wish to participate follow the demands and directions of their leaders. A power dynamic is quickly established.

The theme of student hierarchy generated much comment from students. There was a view that the hierarchy between students was important so that first years gain respect for students in senior years. Older students had the view that the hierarchy allowed first years to be equal with each other as a year group and bond closely. For example, students stated that:

At the very beginning it's...really important that the hierarchy kind of levels everyone out. That's...a big part of O Week, which I think's really important.

Freshers need to know that we have the maturity and experience that they don't have. So, yeah, it is important that they respect us and see us with authority.

I think the hierarchy still exists for practical reasons... It's just there to make sure everything runs in the College.

In contrast, other students stated:

There are a lot of people...in positions of power in the College hierarchy who ...have the loudest voices and manage to indoctrinate/influence younger years to act/talk as they do.

There is no evidence that for students to own their College experience they need to have power over the place. For some students, [going to] College means adhering to draconian traditions that run through this place. This doesn't set people up for real life where they have to be capable people.

²² 10% of female first-year undergraduates agreed compared to 1% of male first-year undergraduates. Similarly, 19% of female undergraduates in second year or higher were more likely to agree, compared to 5% of male undergraduates in their second year or higher at College.

The Project Team believes that student hierarchies which are not a part of the proper and accountable student leadership system can undermine the inclusiveness of the College and can be detrimental for some students. Unchecked, any hierarchy can result in, at best, an inequality between individuals and, at worst, abuses of power. Poor practices emanating from hierarchies is contradictory to good and ethical leadership. The management of problematic student hierarchies overlaps with the management of behaviours that can be construed as ‘hazing’ because of the shared principles regarding the workings of power.

2.2.4 Best practice student leadership

Best practice recognises that student leadership is integral, not supplementary, to educational institutions.²³ When enabled and supported, student leadership is associated with increased positive outcomes including in the areas of cultural change and renewal.²⁴

Developed specifically for university student leadership, the ‘social change model’ has been identified as one of the most broadly applicable, successful, and well-known leadership development models for higher education.²⁵ A value-based leadership development model, it defines leaders and leadership as:

*[A] leader [is] one who is able to effect positive change for the betterment of others, the community, and society. All people, in other words, are potential leaders. Moreover, the process of leadership cannot be described simply in terms of the behaviour of an individual; rather, leadership involves collaborative relationships that lead to collective action grounded in the shared values of people who work together to effect positive change.*²⁶

Further, as the authors state:

*The notions of leader as change agent and of leadership as collective action to effect social change suggest that a conscious focus on values should be at the core of any leadership development effort.*²⁷

Best practice student leadership affirms the importance of ‘leadership development programs’ in building strong leadership behaviours, particularly when targeted at students in their first year of tertiary education.²⁸ Such training should include information about the meaning and qualities of good leadership, as well as education about the power and influence leaders have in relation to other students – particularly newcomers such as first years. Student leadership should be highly participatory and non-hierarchical.²⁹ This is in part to ensure that the student leaders do not unwittingly contribute to an environment that is problematically hierarchical, exclusive or potentially unsafe.³⁰ Furthermore, staff leadership plays a critical role in modelling and nurturing strong student leadership.³¹

23 Astin, W & Astin, H 2000, *Leadership Reconsidered: Engaging Higher Education in Social Change*, p. 27.

24 Hilliard, A 2010, ‘Student Leadership At The University.’ *Journal of College Teaching & Learning (TLC)*, 7(2); Universities UK 2016, ‘Changing the Culture: Report of the Universities UK Taskforce examining violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students’ p. 32; Dugan, J & Komives, S 2007, *Developing Leadership Capacity in College Students: Findings from a National Study*, National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, p. 8.

25 Astin, H & Astin, W 1996, *A Social Change Model of Leadership Development: Guidebook version III*, Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles.

26 *ibid.*, p. 16; also Cress, C, Astin, H, Zimmerman-Oster, K & Burkhardt, J 2001, ‘Developmental outcomes of college students’ involvement in leadership activities’, *Journal of College Student Development*, 42:1, p. 15–27.

27 Astin, H & Astin, W, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

28 Posner, B 2009, ‘A Longitudinal Study Examining Change in Students’ Leadership Behaviour’, *Journal of College Student Development*, 50,5; p. 551.

29 Astin, H & Astin, W 2000, *Leadership Reconsidered: Engaging Higher Education in Social Change*; Astin, H and Astin, W 1996, *op. cit.*

30 de Klerk, V 2013, ‘Initiation, Hazing or Orientation? A case study at a South African University’, *International Research in Education*, Vol. 1, No. 1, September.

31 Astin, H & Astin, W 2000, *op. cit.*

In terms of selection of student leaders, a transparent and rigorous process is critical to ensure that those with the best leadership capabilities or potential are appointed. On numerous occasions, the Project Team heard that current processes in each College do not guard against students being elected based on popularity, rather than their demonstrated leadership skills. While recognising that the current student leaders demonstrate appropriate leadership and decision-making ability, the system does not guarantee that this will always be the case. There is a risk that in the future, the best potential leaders may not be chosen. The Project Team heard, for instance:

I think the selection of the leaders is a bit of a popularity contest and the best people aren't always selected.

[In the student elections] every second year, [you may get the] party group [and then the next year it's] 'let's go have a more sensible group' and then the next year, [students] say 'we'd like a bit more party'.

Processes for selection need to ensure that candidates share and emulate the values of the College community including respect and inclusion. To strengthen the selection process, the Project Team believes that a more rigorous and transparent process should be implemented which still preserves the existing strong democratic aspects. It is suggested that the current selection processes for student leadership roles in all Colleges will be enhanced by:

- The development of clear criteria for selection that includes candidates' demonstrated commitment to inclusion, respect and safety.
- Strong support by the College Heads for all candidates proposed for leadership roles.
- The implementation of a transparent, anonymous and confidential voting process.
- Moving the selection process to early Semester Two to allow proper transition, training, mentoring and leadership development for successful candidates.

It is important for student leaders to receive ongoing support via, for example, mentoring, team-building exercises and feedback.³² Campbell et al. have demonstrated that 'students' involvement in mentoring relationships [are] a powerful predictor of leadership gains.³³ In particular, they found that mentoring influenced 'socially responsible leadership.'³⁴

32 Dugan, J & Komives, S, 2007, op. cit., p. 18.

33 Corbin, M, Campbell, M, Dugan, J & Komives, S 2012, 'Mentors and College Student Leadership Outcomes: The Importance of Position and Process.' *Review of Higher Education*, 2012, Vol. 35(4), p. 596.

34 *ibid.*, p. 618.

College has provided me with the greatest amount of support in my transition into university life. It has made me be more appreciative of my surroundings and more confident in my actions... I'm so grateful to be a part of the community. I feel that [my College] will shape me into the person that I want to be. It will challenge my opinions and allow...me to develop new perspectives, new approaches to life situations and new, high achieving goals for the future.

– College Student

Chapter 3: Belonging

A major theme emerging across all Colleges was inclusion, namely students developing a sense of community and belonging. A sense of belonging is considered by many experts to be a fundamental feature of a young adult's successful transition to university and college life, impacting on their personal sense of well-being and ability to succeed. Commenting generally, Pittman and Richmond observe that:

According to the belongingness hypothesis... although attachments to parents and positive relationships with friends are important in individuals' adjustment, those who do not have a sense of connection to a larger group or community will likely experience increased stress and emotional distress.³⁵

86% of surveyed students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel a sense of belonging'. Male undergraduate students in their first year at College were more likely to agree that they feel a sense of belonging (93%) than their female counterparts (86%).

This strong sense of belonging also featured in many of the discussions with students, including group sessions and individual interviews. Comments on the strong attachment and connectedness to College were also captured in the Survey.

Most of the strengths of College life identified by students were underpinned by the strong sense of belonging they felt at their College. Belonging is critical to ensuring an overall positive College and campus experience. In his study on students' sense of campus community, Cheng found that:

...students' feelings of being cared about, treated in a caring way, valued as an individual, and accepted as a part of community contribute directly to their sense of belonging... Students do not like the feeling of being 'a number in a book'. They need to feel at home in the institution, and they want their individual values and differences to be respected and recognised.³⁶

35 Pittman, L & Richmond, A 2008, 'University Belonging, Friendship Quality, and Psychological Adjustment During the Transition to College' *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 76:4, p. 354.

36 Cheng, DX 2004, 'Students' Sense of Campus Community: What it Means, and What to do About It', *NASPA Journal*, 41:2, p. 227

The theme of belonging was featured extensively in discussion groups:

For me, it's like family here... we are all brothers and sisters.

[College] has helped me thrive as a young adult and has always given me support.

College has helped me settle in to Sydney and to meet great people who have become great friends of mine... It's a community, it's supportive and a great place to start uni at.

I'm from the country and grew up in a really rural area, and I knew no one at [College] when I came. It was really challenging for me, as quite an introverted person, to come and get out of my comfort zone and really meet people I wouldn't normally probably mix with. But everyone was just so welcoming and helped me to open up as a person.

I feel safe, included and truly believe that College has not only helped me excel in academia but also learn social skills and gain friendships for life... I just wish more people could have the opportunity to experience College life.

A number of international students also commented on the welcoming nature of their College:

I love this kind of residence. This is what I really like, that 200 people live together as a family. So you can always seek help even it's [late at night] and you feel so frustrated and you text someone: 'Can I come into your room and ask you something?' And they always say 'Yes'. This is the really good thing about College.

I personally love College. I am an [overseas] student that moved here from [another country], and have found it to really shape the way my university experience has played out. I have the opportunity to be close to such a range of people that I don't believe I would have been able to without the College environment.

In O Week, my RA was so helpful and kind. He never let me be alone at intercol events and genuinely cared that I was enjoying College.

3.1 Fitting in

A corollary to a sense of belonging is fitting in. Fitting in refers to a person's feeling that they belong to and are accepted by a particular group or institution. As the discussion above demonstrates, the vast majority of the students with whom we spoke expressed a genuine connection to their College and a deep sense of belonging. For these students, this not only gave them a sense of security and safety but also allowed them to flourish within the College environment.

A small percentage of College students surveyed (5%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I don't fit in at College'. For students who said they didn't fit in (n=54), the most common reasons given were exclusion and/or social isolation (45%), the drinking culture or binge drinking (24%), their socioeconomic background (22%) and being different or having different interests (21%).

Our discussions with students indicate that 'fitting in' or feeling a part of the College community is a key determinant of whether their experience in their residence is either positive or challenging. Students from diverse backgrounds or who have different life experiences 'may have different versions of the College experience.'³⁷ As Cooper writes, 'it is important that students do not merely see themselves as located within a community but that they feel they belong there.'³⁸

While academic literature on fitting in and belonging in residential colleges is limited, studies that address this issue in the context of university campuses more broadly can be instructive. For instance, a number of studies focusing on the factors of success for students have found that a student's sense of belonging is a key criterion as to whether they develop and succeed in a university or college (as defined in the US context) setting.³⁹

37 Cooper, R 2009, 'Constructing Belonging in a Diverse Campus Community', *Journal of College and Character* Vol X, No.3, February, p. 1.
38 *ibid.*, p. 2.

39 Hamrick, FA, Evans, NJ & Schuh, JH 2002, *Foundations of student affairs practice: How philosophy, theory, and research strengthen educational outcomes*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

A sense of whether, and to what extent, students ‘belong in college, fit in well, and are socially integrated,’ is a key factor in their college persistence and success, as measured by grades, retention and graduation.⁴⁰ In his study on the issue, Tinto observes that:

*Students unable to establish...the personal bonds that are the basis for membership in the communities of the institution...are less likely to persist, especially in their first year, than those who forge academic and social connections with their institution.*⁴¹

Pittman and Richmond also note that:

*...entering college requires youths to face multiple transitions, including changes in their living arrangements, academic environments, and friendship networks, while adapting to greater independence and responsibility in their personal and academic lives.*⁴²

For the vast majority of College students, there was a genuine sense of belonging or community. However, some students identified the integration into College as a more challenging experience than it has been for others. For instance, a theme emerged that College is not a place for everyone, particularly ‘introverts’ or those who are shy:

I guess it can be hard for people who are not extroverts to fit in. If you are not into the whole social thing, drinking whatever, it could be hard for you.

I would say that College is not for everyone and that’s something that you need to understand when you come here.

Some international students, for whom the whole notion of a residential college is a new concept, reported that they found fitting in to College life difficult, particularly in the initial phase. This is supported by research by Hughes whose interviews with international students in Australian residential Colleges, suggested that ‘fitting in’ was dependent on confidence and personality.⁴³ Comments from international students to the Project Team included:

You kind of have to be a type of person who is comfortable going up to people and making friends. I’m not like that, and I guess it’s not my culture. So for a while it was hard to make friends and, I guess, fit into the College life.

I feel that the kids from New Zealand can probably fit in easier because the culture is similar to Australia’s. But for students from [country] like me, it is so much harder. You just feel different.

3.1.1 ‘Hooking up’ and having sex in order to ‘fit in’

A theme throughout discussions and the Survey was whether students felt they had to ‘hook up’⁴⁴ or have sex, in order to ‘fit in’. Of the College students surveyed, 9% reported they had experienced feeling like they should have sex in order to fit in or be accepted. Women were significantly more likely to report experiencing this (11%) compared to male students (5%). Students stated, for example:

Hooking up is part of our age group, but there’s a bigger pressure I guess to hook up with another College person when you are living here.

I thought that before I came to [College], there would be a stigma surrounding girls who had slept with lots of boys. It’s more the opposite where you’re judged if you haven’t slept with anyone, because you’re not seen as fun or even somebody worth talking to.

40 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2017, *Supporting Students’ College Success: The Role of Assessment of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Competencies*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

41 Tinto, V 1993, *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (2nd ed.), University of Chicago Press, Chicago, p. 56

42 Pittman, L & Richmond, A 2008, op. cit., p. 343.

43 Hughes, C 2012, ‘All beer and skittles? A qualitative pilot study of the role of alcohol in university college life’, *Australian Universities’ Review*, vol. 54, no. 2, p. 25.

44 ‘Hook ups’ are uncommitted sexual encounters which are becoming progressively more engrained in popular culture, reflecting both evolved sexual predilections and changing social and sexual scripts. See Garcia, J, Reiber, C, Massey, S & Merriwether, A 2012, ‘Sexual hookup culture: A review’, *Review of General Psychology*, 16, pp.161–176.

3.1.2 Diversity and fitting in

Diversity within the College allows students to gain different perspectives and expand their knowledge as they learn about the different experiences of others. The importance of a diverse residential college community has been examined in the Princeton University Taskforce on the Residential College Model. That Taskforce found that residential colleges should:

*...provide a sense of belonging for all students in an environment where different backgrounds and viewpoints are represented, respected and welcomed, and where students are able to engage the full spectrum of diversity at the University.*⁴⁵

Overall, the majority of College students are domestic students:

- 31% are from the Sydney metropolitan area
- 39% are from regional or remote areas
- 16% are from interstate
- 14% are international students.

Approximately 9% of College students surveyed identified with a sexuality other than heterosexual, including gay/lesbian/homosexual, bisexual, asexual and undecided/not sure/questioning. Less than 1% of students surveyed described their gender as 'X' (indeterminate, intersex or unspecified).⁴⁶

Further, 9% of surveyed students identified as 'living with a disability that has lasted or is likely to last 6 months or more that has an impact on your day-to-day life'. Data provided by the Colleges show that as of May 2017, 17 students (less than 1%) identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Five percent of surveyed students reported experiencing 'racist slurs', 'homophobic slurs' or 'pressure to hide or deny sexual orientation and/or gender identity in order to fit in'. A further 17% of surveyed students reported that they had witnessed or observed these behaviours directed at a University of Sydney College student(s).

The importance of diversity and inclusiveness emerged as a key theme during discussion groups and through Survey commentary:

I'd say [my College] is one of the most diverse out of all the Colleges, absolutely.

We have students from the country and from overseas. Everyone who comes here is welcome.

We have students here from different countries. It adds to the make-up of the population here in a good way.

Kerby's research is instructive in relation to racial and cultural diversity on university campuses. She states that diversity on campuses does not just benefit those students from different racial or cultural backgrounds. Rather, she observes that:

*Learning with people from a variety of backgrounds encourages collaboration and fosters innovation, thereby benefitting all students. Research shows that the overall academic and social effects of increased racial diversity on campus are likely to be positive, ranging from higher levels of academic achievement to the improvement of near- and long-term intergroup relations.*⁴⁷

Students generally commented positively on the inclusiveness and acceptance within their College of students who were LGBTI:

I think having a range of students at [College], gay, bi, straight... means we can all understand the experiences of others and in that way we get out of our own bubble.

45 Shelton, N 2016, *Report of the Task Force on the Residential College Model*, February, Princeton University, p. 5.

46 Given the small number of students that described their gender as 'X', the Project Team was unable to report on their specific experience at College.

47 Kerby, S 2012, '10 Reasons Why We Need Diversity on College Campuses', Center for American Progress, 9 October. Accessed 20 July 2017, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2012/10/09/41004/10-reasons-why-we-need-diversity-on-college-campuses/>.

We have more gay kids here in first year, so it's a bit more of a diverse year than it has been.

I felt I could come out at College and it's been fine.

In contrast, some students felt that heteronormative assumptions underpin College life and there is on occasion, indirect homophobia:

With regards to sexual orientation, it has at times felt like I was out of place due to the fact that the majority of relationships formed at College are heterosexual. I'm confident in my own sexual orientation; however, I still do notice myself talking less about my own relationships compared with my straight friends.

You're not going to get...bullied or put down or anything, but [being gay is] just not particularly welcomed in a sense or acknowledged even. It's sort of tolerated but like there's still a degree of people feeling a bit odd about it or...even giving slight judgements.

There is limited research on the experiences of LGBTI students in Australian residential halls and colleges. However, international studies are instructive. In their study, Evans and Wall identify five main issues that LGBTI students face in residential colleges, including, 'coming out, lack of privacy, roommates, lack of activities, and dealing with harassment.'⁴⁸

Further, Fanucce and Taub found that:

As outward expressions of homophobia have become more and more taboo socially, heterosexism (i.e. heteronormativity) and forms of homonegativity have begun to replace homophobia... Homonegativity refers to prejudice against or negative attitudes about LGBT individuals.⁴⁹

The authors noted that the findings from their study show that:

...when LGBT students perceive their residence hall climate to be negative towards them, they are unable to feel like they are part of the community... when this alienation is coupled with negative self-perceptions, their perceived levels of safety and conflict are affected...⁵⁰

A further theme that emerged in discussions and comments provided by students in the Survey was that some Colleges tend to draw a large proportion of students from a relatively small pool of Sydney schools which can impact on the ability of those who did not attend those schools to 'fit in':

I found that many people here came from Sydney private schools and they all had connections and knew each other and so not coming from a private school, I found it a little difficult to fit in at first. But now I love it.

Coming from interstate, I did not expect College to be so 'Sydney', and thought there would be more students from interstate, rural and international places. Many students already knew each other coming into College, so it was hard to find my place, especially during O Week, as I didn't know anyone else and felt like groups had already been formed.

3.1.3 Alcohol and fitting in

The Project Team found that a significant factor, which may or may not determine a student's ability to fit in, was whether they socialised and specifically, socialised and drank alcohol. This was a common theme emerging across each of the Colleges. The place and impact of alcohol is explored in greater detail in Chapter 4. However, it is useful at this point to examine it briefly in the context of fitting in.

48 Evans, NJ & Wall, VA (eds) 1991, *Beyond tolerance: Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals on campus*. Alexandria, VA: ACPA Media. Accessed 11 July 2017, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED336682>.

49 Fanucce, ML & Taub, DJ 2010, 'The relationship of homonegativity to LGBT students' and non-LGBT students' perceptions of residence hall climate'. *The Journal of College and University Student Housing*, 36(2), p. 26.

50 *ibid.*, p. 34.

Almost half (49%) of the College students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'drinking alcohol helps me to socialise and make friends at College'. While there were no significant differences between male and female students or years at College, postgraduate students were significantly less likely to report this (20%).

In her study on the role of alcohol in residential college life, Hughes identifies the 'positive contribution of alcohol consumption to sociability' among college students. She found that drinking facilitates social interaction between residents, with many of her subjects commenting that it allows them to meet new people.⁵¹ Among the cohort of students she interviewed, she found they believed personality and confidence were a key part of fitting in. Despite this, she observed the potential for 'subtle and unintentional social exclusion [to exist]'.⁵²

The Project Team found students' own perceptions of alcohol and fitting in were often varied. Some stated that drinking is irrelevant to whether a student feels a part of the College community, whereas others believed that drinking is critical to finding your place in College, particularly as a fresher. Some students stated:

No one is pressured to drink.

College doesn't make me drink. If I don't want to drink, I don't and no one bugs me about it. People just don't care.

While in O Week, there was always the option to not drink and or take part in activities, it did feel as though you could not connect with people and make friends if you weren't drinking.

I accept alcohol is prominent in College culture, but I have never felt as though there would be negative consequences for me not drinking.

However, others stated:

As a fresher, you would drink here more than you normally would. It's a way of fitting in and finding friends.

I would say that it would be really tough without drinking. I think that so many of our activities revolve around drinking... [Y]ou make your friends in the dining hall, but if you never go out with them or anything you're not going to consolidate those friendships.

I don't drink and at times it is ostracising.

As noted above, the place of alcohol is explored in more detail in Chapter 4.

3.2 Support and assistance

Each College offers students a range of support and assistance to enhance and assist their personal development, academic achievements, College and University experience and, for freshers particularly, their transition into adulthood.

According to Coates, programs offered within a residential College setting can have a range of positive impacts on students. He states that:

Colleges have always had it as part of their mission to provide such support. They have sought to help students develop their identity within a year-level or disciplinary cohort, develop relationships with staff who know their name, and access forms of pastoral support that may not be offered by much larger institutions.⁵³

51 Hughes, C, op. cit., p. 25.

52 ibid.

53 Coates, H & Edwards D, 2009, 'Engaging College Communities: The impact of residential colleges in Australian higher education', *AUSSE Research Briefings*, v.4 June, p. 2.

Of all College students surveyed, 89% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel supported by peers and staff'. Male students were more likely to agree that they felt supported by their peers and staff (92%) than their female counterparts (88%). Students also commented on this to the Project Team:

The environment here is very supportive.

I think the best part of College for me is how supportive everyone is. I always know that someone's going to be there if I need it. And I think everyone gets that feeling about it.

[My College] is a very inclusive College. They offer a huge range of different services to help people if they need it, in any area.

There are a number of levels of support at [my College]...including [the student peer support network], academic support staff and [counselling support]. I have used these services for a number of issues throughout my time at [College] and have found them to be easily accessible and helpful. These support services have enabled me to get the most out of my time at [my College].

Numerous studies have found that living in a residential College has positive benefits on the academic success of students. Turley and Wodtke observe that living on campus can be an:

...important environmental factor associated with increased student involvement, which in turn is a determinant of improved critical thinking ability, intellectual growth, persistence to graduation and satisfaction with college.⁵⁴

The support offered to students in residential Colleges, including academic support, has been shown to have a range of positive impacts on University students. Coates for instance has found that by:

...immersing [students] in an intellectual climate, providing for greater informal contact with academic staff, linking learning with people's lives, and exposing them to enriching academic contexts, colleges can play a very important role in shaping student expectations and their sense of what they would like to achieve.⁵⁵

The Colleges offer extensive tutorial programs and academic support, which students commented was of value in assisting them with the academic demands of University. The strong support offered to students was recognised by many students who felt that it was critical to maintaining the environment of academic excellence of the Colleges. Indeed, deep student engagement and attachment to the institution, underpinned by strong College support, were among the reasons students gave for their high academic commitment and performance. Students stated, for example:

It's great that people here are doing the same subjects and courses or older students are ahead of you in this area, and so they can help you and you can bounce things off them.

[One of the reasons I chose this College was] the academic support...because I read up on the internet and I saw how they had those tutorials...and I really liked that. That was kind of why I came here. And I haven't looked back. They have been great.

The pastoral care offered by the Colleges was also strongly supported by students. Pastoral care can assist students to transition from living 'at home' to living independently. It can also be a vehicle for students to access emotional support.

Each College provides pastoral care through specific staff and their student peer support networks.

The peer pastoral network is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

54 Lopez Turley, RN & Wodtke, G 2010, 'College Residence and Academic Performance: Who Benefits From Living on Campus?', *Urban Education* 45(4), p. 508.

55 Coates, H and Edwards, D 2009, op. cit., p. 3.

3.3 Relationship with the broader University of Sydney community

A strong and uniform theme emerging throughout the Project was College students' sense of marginalisation, and even victimisation, by other students and, on occasion, staff from the broader University of Sydney community.

Of College students surveyed, 51% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel stigmatised by University of Sydney students and staff because I go to College.'⁵⁶

Students told the Project Team that they would not wear any College-branded clothes or display College merchandise when they attended lectures or tutorials at the University, for concern of being singled out or treated differently by non-residential students or University staff.

Students explained that when there are media reports of poor behaviour in University Colleges, they are often targeted, even when these reports relate to other Colleges. Students stated:

A female University of Sydney student verbally attacked me and called me a misogynist pig when she saw my [College] water bottle.

People act like we are helpless if we are female and go to College.

I wouldn't wear my jersey to lectures. I don't want to stick out as going to College.

If I'm at Uni, I will do everything in my power not to mention that I live at College.

There's definitely a culture at Sydney Uni of College bashing...

The Project Team is concerned by the allegations of negative treatment of some College students by non-residential students at the University of Sydney, and on occasion, by academic staff. Such behaviour may isolate College students further and undermine any connectedness College students feel with the University. Additionally, such behaviours may breach the code of conduct for staff and students at the University of Sydney.

However there was a perception by some students that some College residents may contribute to or compound this isolation by confining themselves to only College-based activities or engaging with the broader campus during O Week in a way that draws negative attention. To this end, it is suggested that a greater level of interaction with those on the broader University of Sydney campus be encouraged by College staff and student leaders.

⁵⁶ Undergraduate students in their second year or higher at College were significantly more likely to report feeling stigmatised (63%) than undergraduate freshers (42%) or postgraduate students (14%). There were no differences between male and female students.

Colleges have a big drinking culture... If you didn't drink at all you could be indirectly excluded.

– College Student

Chapter 4: Social interactions

4.1 Extracurricular activities

For many students, a key aspect and highlight of their College experience is engaging in extracurricular activities offered by the College and intercollegiate community. Certainly, being involved in College extracurricular activities, participating in a chosen endeavour, and engaging socially with other students can enhance students' sense of community and belonging. Rinn observes that in residential halls:

Students involved in social organizations...report fewer feelings of loneliness and isolation than students not involved in social organizations.⁵⁷

Accordingly, Colleges facilitate students' engagement in a rich and diverse range of extracurricular activities including sport, drama, music and debating. The Survey revealed that 91% of College students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I get involved in activities and social events organised through my College'. The discussion groups reinforced that this is an important dimension of the College experience:

At [College], you have many, many opportunities to be involved in so many things.

[College] is not just about studying and going to uni. You can play sport or be in things like Palladian. It gives you an all round time, if that's what you want.

Each College also runs social events including parties during O Week, formals, dinners, music festivals, and other informal social activities throughout the academic year.

For first years, a key part of their social interaction comes during O Week. One of the aims of O Week is for freshers to meet other students from within their own College, as well as those from other Colleges, and to begin establishing friendship networks that will help them transition into College life. The following discussion identifies a number of areas where there is social interaction for students. It examines the strengths associated with those interactions and also some of the challenges.

⁵⁷ Rinn, A 2004, 'Academic and Social Effects of Living in Honors Residence Halls', *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council – Online Archive*. 173, p. 68

Many extracurricular social, cultural and sporting activities are offered through the intercollege community such as:

- The Rosebowl Cup: a sporting competition for female students that includes rowing, netball, tennis, athletics, swimming, hockey, soccer and basketball. Each match adds points which are tallied towards an ultimate result.
- The Rawson Cup: a sporting competition for male students that includes cricket, rowing, swimming, rugby, tennis, soccer, basketball and athletics. Each match adds points which are tallied towards establishing an ultimate result.
- The Palladian Cup: a cultural competition featuring vocal, instrumental, oration, debating, art, dance and drama. Each competition adds points which are tallied towards an ultimate result.

A perception by some was that the all-male history of some co-educational/co-residential Colleges means that male-dominated sport holds a particular status in those Colleges. This can have impact on the place of women's sport in college life and may more broadly impact the place and treatment of women by some students in the College.

4.2 O Week

Freshers' initial experience of College life begins with O Week. This occurs the week before formal university classes begin when new students move into their College and participate in a number of activities, events and parties with other freshers from their own and other University of Sydney Colleges.

O Week is a time to celebrate starting College and University. The week also provides an opportunity for first-year students to be oriented into the policies and systems of their new residence. Presentations on issues relating to mental health, alcohol use, sexual harassment and sexual assault are also given during this week. It is not uncommon for residential College students to engage primarily with their own College's O Week program, rather than attend activities or events run by the University.

O Week emerged as a common subject among students across year groups. For the majority with whom the Project Team spoke, O Week was a fun and exciting time, providing opportunities to meet other first years, learn about College traditions, become connected to the College and experience a range of social activities, including intercollege activities. For many, it was a time when they became connected to the College.

Events occur on and off campus, and include parties at their home College, as well as at other University of Sydney Colleges. Some activities are paid for by students, including through an annual fee to the Student Club; others are partly subsidised; and some are at no cost to students.

According to a number of students, the experiences offered during O Week allow them to bond with other first years and to feel connected to the unique environment of their College.

Students described their O Week as follows:

I loved it. We really all came together. And at the intercol events, we all came together as a family.

There's really no time to feel homesick as you are surrounded by people who want you to have a good time and who care. So I never felt like I wanted to go home or didn't want to be here.

O Week took me out of my comfort zone, in a good way. It really forced me to make friends which I may not have been able to do if I wasn't at College.

I'm from the country. I knew no one at [College]...and literally by the end of the week I felt more comfortable with the group of friends that I'd made here than I did with the people back at home for me.

There was also a strong sense among students that O Week had changed in recent years and had become more inclusive:

All the leaders made it comfortable and stressed that we are all family now. They put so much effort into fostering a College spirit.

I think this year it was run even differently than my O Week. There was nothing intimidating.

I think there was a conscious effort this year to make O Week tamer but still make it fun.

It's changed so much this year. It's completely different, and it was so good this year. We really had good vibes going, and the O Week leadership group worked really hard to change it.

O Week is largely student run although in recent years College staff have, to varying degrees, played a more active role in the management of events. Among the various changes to O Week by Colleges are a reduction in its duration, a requirement that all transactions and events must be endorsed by the College Head or their Executive Team, and greater opportunities for students to 'opt out' of events.

However, despite the changes over the last few years, problematic elements for some students remained, including in relation to a strong focus on drinking:

O Week was intense, insane and I think a lot of it was because of the drinking.

I didn't expect it. O Week smacked me across the face.

You had to be a certain type to fit in. I didn't feel comfortable with some of the activities ... You could say no but it's a social thing. There's indirect pressure.

The emphasis on drinking in O Week is not uncommon but can set a precedent for drinking throughout the year. According to Riordan, Scarf and Conner, O Weeks are:

...often typified by heavy alcohol use. Although typically viewed as a 'one time' event, the higher levels of drinking that students engage in during Orientation Week may persist into the academic year.⁵⁸

The Project Team is aware that Colleges arrange non-drinking events for students during O Week. However, there was an overriding view that these were given less priority than the events where alcohol was available:

Several dry O Week events were organised poorly. For example, not informing freshers of the bus departure time to get to Skyzone until five minutes after the bus was due to leave from [a College]. Students had to run to [the College] to catch the bus which luckily waited for them.

The non-drinking activities were not properly organised and so the main focus was on the drinking events.

Best practice suggests that there is no 'one size fits all' model for student orientation. Rather, programs should be tailored to the students and the institution, and should consider the social and academic needs of the students; the mission and goals of the institution; and how best to integrate the students in light of these.⁵⁹ To transition successfully into a new environment, Lizzio, in examining university settings, proposes that students need to feel capable, connected, resourceful, have a sense of purpose, and to understand the academic and institutional culture.⁶⁰ Further, to create an equitable and inclusive environment – which is critical to student safety, retention, and success – students need to feel that diversity is supported and welcomed.

Staff who lead orientations should be given comprehensive training.⁶¹ This training should include education about the dynamics of power; their own role in establishing and maintaining student hierarchies; and the potential negatives of these. Orientation should occur in collaboration with the campus community, and orientation leaders should remember that their programs are about the wider institution, as well as the students who they are immediately serving.

58 Riordan, B Scarf, D & Conner, T 2015, 'Is Orientation Week a Gateway to Persistent Alcohol Use in University Students? A Preliminary Investigation', *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 76, pp. 204–211.

59 HigherEdJobs n.d., 'New Student Programs: A Look Inside Orientation, Transition and Retention Programs', Interview with Dr. Cynthia L. Hernandez of Texas A&M University. Accessed 3 Aug 2017, <https://www.higheredjobs.com/HigherEdCareers/interviews.cfm?ID=402>.

60 Lizzio, A, 2006, 'Designing an orientation and transition strategy for commencing students', Griffith University: First Year Experience Project. Accessed 17 November 2017, https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/51875/Alfs-5-Senors-Paper-FYE-Project,-2006.pdf.

61 HigherEdJobs n.d., op. cit.

Drawing on best practice approaches in other colleges, Queen's University in Canada established a Senate Orientation Activity Review Board (SOARB) which reports to the university's senate. SOARB sets and monitors policies and has the authority to stop activities which breach policy. The policy bans hazing and its guiding principles for its 'Faculty and Group Orientation Week' are:

- Respect and safety.
- Inclusivity and equity.
- Accessibility regardless of financial or physical barriers.
- Good citizenship.
- Leadership in modelling the desired institutional culture.⁶²

All incoming students are given information about hazing and other inappropriate conduct including definitions, responsibilities, and negative consequences. Orientation Week leaders' contracts can be terminated and orientation programs can be put on probation on the basis of non-compliance with policies. SOARB's Orientation Week policy states that 'all events must have risk assessment and that Orientation leaders must have comprehensive training.'⁶³

4.3 The place of alcohol in social interactions

A common theme that generated much discussion and debate among students related to alcohol and alcohol-related attitudes, behaviours and activities. The nature and depth of the comments suggest that alcohol plays an important part in the culture of College life and underpins a number of so-called College traditions.

Roche and Watt observe that University settings offer 'a unique social context' for the consumption of excessive amounts of alcohol.⁶⁴ A number of factors contribute to this uniqueness.

For many students, entering university coincides with a number of major transition points:

- Turning 18 years of age and being able to drink alcohol legally.
- Moving away from the structures and routines of high school.
- Declining parental control.
- Increasing peer influence.

In addition, transitioning-age youth or emerging adults tend to be, by virtue of their neuro-development, impulsive and seek out risk-taking behaviours. Loxton et al.⁶⁵ identified impulsivity as a consistent predictor of student alcohol misuse.

62 Senate Orientation Activities Review Board, 2016, *Orientation Week Policy Manual*, Queens University.

63 *ibid.*, p. 25. For Orientation Committee Heads, this training includes: 'risk management, accessibility, sustainability, diversity, equity, and inclusivity in event planning, academic event planning, budgeting and sponsorship, interfaculty relationships, hazing prevention and peer-to-peer leadership strategies.' O Week leaders are to receive training including on 'Student leaders' roles and responsibilities, orientation schedule and activities, SOARB expectations and recommendations, how to make events physically accessible, inclusive and discrimination free, how to identify, approach and refer a student in distress or need of mental health support, how to talk about, raise awareness of and discourage alcohol misuse, student Code of Conduct and expectations for behaviour including hazing, goals and objectives of Orientation, interfaculty relations, accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusivity, resources available on campus, sexual health and consent, emergency procedures, how to be a leader post-Orientation, and local community engagement and responsibilities during Orientation Week.'

64 Roche, A & Watt, K 1999, 'Drinking and university students: From celebration to inebriation', *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 18, p. 389.

65 Loxton, N, Bunker, R, Dingle, G & Wong, V, 2015, 'Drinking not thinking: A prospective study of personality traits and drinking motives on alcohol consumption across the first year of university', *Personality and Individual Differences* 79, pp. 134–139.

Recent Australian research reveals that young adults (18 to 24-year-olds) are drinking less.⁶⁶ However, further Australian-based studies over the last two decades and across states and territories suggest that university students consume quantities of alcohol that are ‘hazardous’ or ‘harmful’ on a regular basis^{67, 68, 69, 70, 71} Most recently, Rickwood et al.⁷² found that 46.6% of students were drinking at harmful/hazardous levels (55.1% for males; 43.1% for females).

Statistics such as these led Hughes to conclude that the alcohol consumption of Australian university students is ‘problematic’⁷³ and Rickwood et al. to consider it to be ‘harmful’.⁷⁴ The high consumption of alcohol by tertiary students observed in these studies is obviously not unique to Australian university campuses. High prevalence of excessive drinking among university students has also been found in New Zealand,⁷⁵ the United States⁷⁶ and the United Kingdom.^{77, 78}

In one of the few Australian studies to separate data pertaining to College and non-College students, Schofield demonstrates that students living in College residences have higher rates of harmful drinking than those living in non-College settings.⁷⁹ Residential College students also experienced more harmful alcohol-related issues than those living elsewhere.

In the context of residential College settings where students have access to free or subsidised alcohol and can walk to and from bars/parties and back to their accommodation, Schofield also concludes that these students may not have the same opportunities as non-College students to abstain from or limit alcohol use.⁸⁰ She concludes that, within the residential College setting, alcohol is ‘part of college students’ communal, everyday life... drinking [is] routinized and some of its harms treated as customary or typical’.⁸¹

Complementing Schofield’s quantitative work is a qualitative study by Hughes⁸² that examines the social functions of alcohol within the Australian residential College environment. Basing her work upon a series of focus groups across three universities, she identified two themes which describe the contribution of alcohol to residential College life, being (a) sociability and relaxation; and (b) bonding and social cohesion.⁸³ Hughes’s conclusion is similar to that of Schofield. She sees alcohol to be, for many College residents, ‘an intrinsic part of the college experience’.⁸⁴

66 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2016, *National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS) 2016 key findings*: Australian Government, p. 2.

67 Roche, A & Watt K 1999, ‘Drinking and university students: From celebration to inebriation’, *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 18, pp. 389–399.

68 Davey, J Davey, T & Obst, P 2002, ‘Alcohol consumption and drug use in a sample of Australian university students’, *Youth Studies Australia* 21 (3), pp. 25–28.

69 Utpala-Kumar, R & Deane, F 2010, ‘Rates of alcohol consumption and risk status among Australian university students vary by assessment questions’, *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 29, pp. 28–34.

70 Kypri, K, Hallett, J, Howat, P, McManus, A, Maycock, B, Bowe, S & Horton, J 2009, ‘Randomised controlled trial of proactive web-based alcohol screening and brief intervention for university students’, *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 169, pp. 1508–14.

71 Rickwood, D, George, A, Parker, R & Mikhailovich K 2011, ‘Harmful alcohol use on campus. Impact on young people at university’, *Youth Studies Australia* 30, pp. 34–40.

72 *ibid.*

73 Hughes, C 2012, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

74 Rickwood, D, George, A, Parker R & Mikhailovich K 2011, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

75 Kypri, K, Cronin, M & Wright, C 2005, ‘Do university students drink more hazardously than their non-student peers?’, *Addiction*, 100, pp. 713–714.

76 Ham, L & Hope, D 2003, ‘College students and problematic drinking: A review of the literature’, *Clinical Psychology Review*, 23, pp. 719–759.

77 Gill, J 2002, ‘Reported levels of alcohol consumption and binge drinking within the UK under-graduate student population over the last 25 years’, *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, 37, pp. 109–120.

78 McAlaney, J & McMahon, J 2007, ‘Normative beliefs, misperceptions and heavy episodic drinking in a British student sample’, *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 68, pp. 385–392.

79 Schofield, T 2014, ‘Alcohol use and harm minimisation among Australian university students: Final report to University Colleges Australia’ *An Australian Research Council (Linkage) Project (LP100100471)*

80 *ibid.*

81 *ibid.*, p. 15.

82 Hughes, C 2012, *op. cit.*

83 *ibid.*

84 *ibid.*, p. 27.

Research demonstrates that the high rates and levels of consumption of alcohol in College can result in students being at risk of harm to themselves (e.g. alcohol-related injury) or others (e.g. sexual assault or other assault). For example, a number of studies have found that alcohol-related sexual assault is a 'common occurrence' on college campuses.⁸⁵

Most recently, the Australian Human Rights Commission's (the Commission) *Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities* reported that alcohol was often identified as a factor contributing to people's experiences of sexual assault and sexual harassment. The Commission received a particularly large number of submissions identifying alcohol as a factor contributing to College-based sexual assault and sexual harassment. The Commission also received a number of submissions which reported sexual assault occurring while the person being assaulted was unconscious or severely impaired due to the influence of alcohol.⁸⁶

Research reported by the University of Michigan explains the connection between drinking and sexual assault in a useful way:

Intoxication may make someone physically and/or mentally less able to resist an assault. It is important to remember that an inability or unwillingness to resist does NOT make an assault the survivor's fault... Alcohol is often used by perpetrators as an excuse for their actions, and as an attempt to shift responsibility for the assault away from themselves and onto the survivor... It is important to remember that, while alcohol use may be correlated with sexual assault, this does not mean that alcohol use in any way causes sexual assault. Instead, alcohol is often used as a tool to target victims, and then used by perpetrators as an excuse for their actions.⁸⁷

4.3.1 Alcohol in College settings

Students and recent alumni observed that alcohol is a significant feature of College life:

At Colleges, drinking is at a much higher level than other aspects of the campus.

[The] big drinking culture – can sometimes be a bit worrying.

This is the first time you've ever been in an environment where there's literally just alcohol flowing, you can just get however much you want, you don't even pay for it at some of the parties and stuff.

There are some people who would drink less if they weren't in College. It's easier to drink because of internal events that are subsidised in student fees.

Some of the Colleges operate their own bars which open at various times, either during the week (during semester) or for events only.

The College bars are staffed by students, with second or more senior-year students being nominated as Bar Managers. The Project Team understands that drinks are cheaper than they are at commercial bar outlets.

A number of patterns of alcohol consumption of College students were identified in the discussion groups and in the Survey pertaining to particular times of the week, year or events including formal and informal events. These include:

Days of the week:

- Formal Dinners on Monday: wine with the meal
- Individual College bar nights or events

85 Abbey, A 2002, 'Alcohol-Related Sexual Assault: A Common Problem among College Students' *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, No. 14, pp. 118–128.; Abbey, A, Ross, LT, Mcduffie, D & Mcauslan, P 1996, 'Alcohol and dating risk factors for sexual assault among college women.' *Psychol. Women Q.* 20, pp. 147–169; Copenhaver, S & Grauerholz, E, 1991, 'Sexual victimization among sorority women: Exploring the links between sexual violence and institutional practices.' *Sex Roles* 24 (1–2), pp. 31–41; Harrington, NT & Leitenberg, H 1994, 'Relationship between alcohol consumption and victim behaviors immediately preceding sexual aggression by an acquaintance.' *Viol. Vict.* 9, pp. 315–324; Koss, MP 1988, 'Hidden rape: Sexual aggression and victimization in a national sample of students in higher education', in AW Burgess (ed) *Rape and Sexual Assault II*, New York: Garland, pp. 3–25.

86 Australian Human Rights Commission 2017, op. cit.

87 University of Michigan, n.d. 'Alcohol & Sexual Assault'. Accessed 21 July 2017, <https://sapac.umich.edu/article/50>.

Settings within the College:

- Student rooms and College corridors: students can keep alcohol in their room and drink both in their rooms and the college corridors.
- Dining hall on a Monday night during Formal Dinners.
- The College bar for those Colleges with one.

Times in the academic calendar:

- O Week
- Silly Season
- Individual College dance parties or other events.

Types of social events and College sports:

- Victory Dinners following major sporting events
- Particular bar nights
- Balls and formals (including pre- and post-ball drinks).

Patterns of alcohol consumption like these have been labelled by Leontini et al. as ‘institutional micro-processes’.⁸⁸ These researchers found a relationship between such micro-processes and a ‘culture of intoxication’ that has shaped College policy about alcohol use:

...students’ widespread and often heavy drinking was inextricably linked to, and enmeshed in residential college routines, events and occasions... [S]tudents’ drinking was not independent of, or ‘neatly separated’ from, other significant institutional processes characterizing college life.⁸⁹

As noted above, 49% of surveyed students agreed or strongly agreed that ‘drinking alcohol helps me to socialise and make friends at College’ (no significant differences between male and female students or years at College were observed). Further, 15% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that ‘there is too much focus on drinking at College’ (again, no significant differences between male and female students or years at College were observed).

A common theme was whether students feel pressure to drink at College, or whether students put pressure on *themselves* to drink to fit in. The Survey revealed that 13% of the College students surveyed had experienced pressure to drink alcohol when they didn’t want to since starting at College. Female students were significantly more likely to report experiencing this (15%) than male students (9%). A further 1% of surveyed students reported experiencing pressure to take drugs when they didn’t want to. Of the 13% of students who reported experiencing either pressure to drink or pressure to take drugs,⁹⁰ 84% reported this pressure came from fellow student(s) from their College, 28% from student(s) from a different University of Sydney College, and 10% from University student(s) who were not University of Sydney College residents.⁹¹

Of students surveyed, 31% also reported witnessing or observing other College student(s) being pressured to drink alcohol (30%) or take drugs (5%) when they didn’t want to.

88 Leontini, R, Schofield, T, Lindsay, J, Brown, R, Hepworth, J & Germov J 2015, ‘Social stuff’ and institutional micro-processes. Alcohol use by students in Australian university residential colleges’ in *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 42, p. 171.

89 Leontini, R, Schofield, T, Brown, R, & Hepworth, J 2017, ‘Drinking culture’ in university colleges: An Australian case study of the role of alcohol policy, management and organisational processes’ in *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 44, pp. 32–48.

90 Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

91 Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

Students in discussion groups and one-on-one interviews expressed differing views on whether there was a pressure, either direct or indirect, to drink. Some stated:

There is no pressure to drink. It is an individual choice whether you drink or not.

Maybe freshers may put pressure on themselves in the early weeks but that wears off and no one would ever put pressure on them or anyone to drink or get drunk.

We are adults so no one pressures anyone and no one feels like they can't say no to drinking.

On the other hand, the Project Team heard from students that there is both direct and indirect pressure to drink, such as the pressure that comes from wanting to fit in:

I would find it hard to say no to drinking if I wasn't a confident person.

People definitely feel pressured to drink, even if [a leader] is saying 'you don't have to.'

If you come from the country or you are not part of a group already and you have never drunk a lot before, you wouldn't want to stick out as the only person not drinking.

There are still many small events at...College where the main focus is drinking alcohol (in excessive amounts) that are uncomfortable for students who choose not to drink alcohol.

While students acknowledged that alcohol is a key part of socialising at College, they rightly acknowledge that drinking is an issue for the broader Australian community:

Drinking here is an Australian thing. It has nothing to do with College.

Drinking is an issue for Australian youth, not just College students.

Nevertheless, an Australian study focusing on drinking among College and non-College students found that students living in College residences have substantially higher rates of 'harmful drinking'⁹² than those living in non-College settings (41.3% College students compared to 26.2% students living at home).⁹³

The Project Team acknowledges that drinking is not just an issue for Colleges but is a reflection of wider Australian society, as well as the drinking practices of this age group. However, residential Colleges have a perceived and actual duty of care in relation to the safety and well-being of their students. Students have an expectation that they will be safe and free from preventable harm during their time at College. This notion of Colleges' duty of care is noted by Leontini, who observes the disjuncture between the autonomy which Colleges give their students, the resulting heavy and frequent alcohol consumption and the College's duty of care:

...a significant degree of student autonomy in relation to alcohol results in heavy and/or frequent consumption, such that college management is faced with the 'problem' of frequently managing excessive drinking alongside their duty of care.⁹⁴

The Project Team heard that alcohol can lead to behaviours which can intimidate students and jeopardise their safety. Comments in the Survey to the question of what makes students feel unsafe included:

The drinking culture, broken glass strewn across the College, inebriated College students behaving in a disorderly manner all contribute to the unsafe environment.

Drinking behaviours of boys getting rough – pressure to have sex if boys are really drunk and pressuring.

The antics of drunk, large athletic boys who live in the College... I have been verbally abused and physically intimidated on several occasions.

[I feel unsafe] walking through College at night [and] being exposed to drunk ...boys wanting to cause trouble on numerous occasions.

92 'Harmful drinking' was defined by Schofield as an AUDIT (Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test) score of 10*.

93 Schofield, T 2014, op. cit.

94 Leontini et al., 2015, op. cit., p. 182.

Female students in individual interviews with the Project Team also commented:

I wish I didn't fear it when the boys get drunk.

Some of the boys can be terrifying when they are drunk. They bash on the doors, yell out. It's not just disrespectful, it's intimidating.

When some students get drunk, they can grope you in the bars and at parties.

4.3.2 College policy response

Since the mid-1980s, state and national alcohol policies have been informed by an approach known as harm minimisation. This policy approach aims to address alcohol issues by reducing the harmful effects excessive drinking can have on both individuals and the broader community. The approach takes into account not only the health consequences of alcohol misuse, but social and economic consequences as well.

Harm minimisation comprises three major strategies including:

- i. Supply reduction: controlling the amount of alcohol available.
- ii. Demand reduction: encouraging people not to use, to delay use, or to use less alcohol through information and education strategies, treatment programs and regulatory controls.
- iii. Harm reduction: helping those who continue to drink to do so in ways that are less harmful.^{95, 96}

The Project Team notes that each College incorporates positive elements of this approach in their alcohol policies. Specific examples in the College alcohol policies are:

- St Andrew's College – the alcohol policy addresses informed consent as it relates to alcohol and settings in which alcohol is being served. The policy also acknowledges the importance of harm minimisation and provides the current Australian guidelines for safer alcohol consumption levels.
- St John's College – the alcohol policy is articulated in the Student Handbook. It identifies the dangers of alcohol, its immediate and cumulative effects, and the danger of mixing alcohol with other drugs. Information on standard drinks is provided. Binge drinking paraphernalia is expressly prohibited.
- Sancta Sophia College – the alcohol policy is in the Code of Conduct in the Student Guide and recognises that 'alcohol consumption is part of a College's social environment' but that the College will not condone 'alcohol consumption that has harmful physical, behavioural or social outcomes'. The policy covers 12 points of practice, including no drinking games or competitions; no BYO alcohol in the Dining Hall; and no alcohol at any intercollegiate competitions.
- Wesley College – the alcohol policy includes the four College Values as guiding and informing the College's approach to alcohol within the College – values of acting responsibly, displaying respect, supporting others and accepting responsibility. Four objectives inform the policy, including that the College's approach to the service and management of alcohol is one that is underpinned by responsible drinking, and that the consumption of alcohol does not lead to inappropriate behaviour. Importantly, the policy is reviewed annually by Wesley Council.

95 Grant, T n.d. *Harm minimisation and diversion programs*. Alcohol Tobacco and other drugs branch, Queensland Health. Accessed 27 July 2017, http://www.aic.gov.au/media_library/conferences/2006-drugdiversion/2tanyagrants.pdf.

96 Department of Health (Australian Government) n.d. *What is harm minimization?* Accessed 27 July 2017, <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/drugtreat-pubs-front5-wk-toc~drugtreat-pubs-front5-wk-secb~drugtreat-pubs-front5-wk-secb-6~drugtreat-pubs-front5-wk-secb-6-1>.

- The Women’s College – the alcohol policy recognises the importance of harm minimisation and the interrelationship between alcohol, the environment and the individual. The explicit policy objective is ‘to create an environment that encourages moderation and a responsible attitude to the consumption of alcohol’. The policy is reviewed annually. The College gained UniCan Accreditation Level 3 status in October 2017. This is the highest level of accreditation awarded by this national initiative between Alcohol and Drug Education Specialists (ADES) Australia and the Australasian Association of College and Housing Officers to change alcohol norms in university residential properties. The Women’s College is the first independent College in Australia to achieve this standing.

4.3.3 A common College response to alcohol and alcohol-related harm

There is no doubt that each of the Colleges has made significant efforts to minimise risks and harmful alcohol-related behaviours and actions as evidenced in the positive features of their policies. Nevertheless, challenges persist. An opportunity therefore exists to strengthen College responses. The Project Team proposes that a common, uniform response to alcohol and alcohol-related harm be adopted by each College.

In considering the most appropriate response to reconfiguring the current culture of alcohol use within the Colleges, the Project Team has drawn upon a range of academic work including the work of Leontini,⁹⁷ Schofield⁹⁸ and their colleagues. With funding from the Australian Research Council, these researchers undertook a comprehensive examination of alcohol use and harm minimisation among Australian university students (including those in residential colleges) for University Colleges Australia (UCA).⁹⁹

As a result of this work, UCA established a National Steering Committee for Alcohol Harm Minimisation. This committee has been established under the chairmanship of Professor Tim Corney. It also has a University of Sydney Colleges’ representative in Dr Marie Leech, Principal of Sancta Sophia College.¹⁰⁰

The Project Team welcomes the UCA’s commitment to addressing the issue of alcohol at the national level, as well as the establishment of the National Steering Committee for Alcohol Harm Minimisation. However, it also recognises that change, beginning at the national level and subsequently ‘trickling down’ to the state level, will take time. The Project Team believes that the current risks resulting from alcohol-related behaviour in the Colleges at the University of Sydney are such that more immediate action must be taken.

It therefore recommends the establishment of a common approach for alcohol harm minimisation for each of the residential Colleges. It proposes that policy adopt the aims of its national counterpart proposed by Leontini, namely:

- i. *To formulate a strategy to minimise alcohol-related harm in university resident colleges and halls in Australia.*
- ii. *To base formulation of the strategy on relevant research literature, specifically that generated by the ARC Linkage Projects: Alcohol use and harm minimisation among Australian university students.*
- iii. *To focus the strategy’s formulation on the organisation and governance of drinking cultures in Colleges and halls.*
- iv. *To identify from the Linkage Project a set of principles to inform and guide the organisation and governance of drinking cultures in Colleges and halls.*
- v. *Based on iv., to make specific recommendations for actions/interventions, and to provide specific examples and case studies illustrating where, how and when interventions can be implemented, to address aspects of organisations and governance responsible for alcohol-related harms.*
- vi. *To establish protocols for monitoring and critically evaluating the organisation and governance of drinking cultures in Colleges and halls.*

97 Leontini, R 2016, Alcohol use and harm minimisation among Australian university students. Paper presented at the Second Collegiate Way International Conference, 13–17 Nov 2016, ANU, Canberra. Accessed 19 July 2017, <https://universitycollegeaustralia.edu.au/conferences/papers>.

98 Schofield, T 2014, op. cit.

99 UCA is the representative professional body for Heads and Deputies of residential colleges and halls throughout Australia.

100 Alwyn, R 2017, ‘E-news’, *Better Leaders, Better Collegiate Life*, e-newsletter of the University Colleges Australia. Accessed 21 July 2017, <https://universitycollegesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/From-the-UCA-President-March-2017-copy-01.html>.

- vii. *To collaborate with the UCA Executive and other bodies to fund the strategy and further research/evaluation.*
- viii. *To report back to the UCA Executive and membership on progress of the strategy and further research.*
- ix. *To inform and advise residential College councils and the University administration (senior management) about the organisation and governance of College drinking and its relationship to students' alcohol use and harm minimisation.*¹⁰¹

The Project Team sees considerable advantage in the introduction of a common alcohol approach across all Colleges. It would avoid any ambiguity as to expected behaviour among students who routinely move from one College to another to access their bars or attend parties. A common approach would also send a very powerful message to students that all Colleges take the issue of alcohol and alcohol-related harm seriously and that they stand united in their commitment to harm minimisation principles, strategies and interventions.

The formulation of the uniform approach should draw upon positive elements currently available in the alcohol policies of each of the Colleges, as well as incorporate other best practice policies.

Drawing on best practice and a public health emphasis on harm minimisation, the Project Team suggests considering the following key elements for a common approach:

A. Strategy: reduce access/supply of alcohol to students

- Hold organised 'pres' (pre-events) in residential corridors or common rooms and not in individual student rooms to minimise excessive alcohol consumption.
- Prohibit any drinking implement that may encourage rapid consumption of alcohol from College (e.g. kegs, funnels, yard glasses and beer bong).
- Ensure licensees and bar management roles are held by qualified individuals or organisations independent of the Student Club and contracted by College staff.
- Prohibit the use of student club fees for the purchase of alcohol.
- Eliminate subsidisation of alcohol by both students and College management by charging commercial bar rates for all alcohol at all College events and venues.
- Set time limits on the consumption of alcohol, meaning that alcohol is not to be consumed in the College between midnight and midday, unless specifically permitted by arrangement with senior administration.
- Provide for alcohol-free days at the beginning of O Week (see, for example, Griffith University and Ormond College, University of Melbourne).
- Control the maximum amount of alcohol available at a function so that the anticipated allowance per person will not be harmful.

B. Strategy: reduce demand of alcohol by students

- Provide all students with access to online prevention intervention programs (see, for example, eCHECKUP TO GO¹⁰² and My Student Body¹⁰³). These are designed to motivate students to reduce their consumption of alcohol based upon identification of their own patterns of alcohol use and risk factors associated with alcohol use.^{104, 105}

101 Leontini, R 2016, op. cit.

102 eCHECKUP TO GO n.d. 'Alcohol eCHECKUP TO GO'. Accessed 31 July 2017, <http://echeckuptogo.com/programs/alcohol>.

103 Chiauzzi, E, Craig T, Green, T, Lord, S, Thum, C & Goldstein, M 2005, 'My Student Body: A high-risk drinking prevention web site for college students', *Journal of American College Health*, 53, pp. 263–274.

104 Hustad, J, Barnett, N, Borsari, B & Jackson, K 2010, 'Web-based alcohol prevention for incoming college students: A randomised controlled trial', *Addictive Behaviors* 35, pp. 183–189.

105 Dumas, D & Andersen, L 2009, 'Reducing alcohol use in first-year students: Evaluation of a web-based personalized feedback program', *Journal of College Counselling* 12, pp. 18–32.

- Reduce the number of onsite college events and occasions with alcohol.
- Increase the number of onsite college events and occasions *without* alcohol.
- Use college liquor licences to specify and control areas for alcohol consumption.

C. Strategy: reduce harm caused by alcohol

- Prohibit drinking games or competitions involving alcohol and other activities that promote binge drinking.
- Prohibit events that encourage rapid consumption of alcohol, e.g. 'Roo Courts'.¹⁰⁶
- Ensure that water, non-alcoholic drinks, low-alcoholic drinks and food are always provided at events where alcohol is served.
- Ensure that appropriate intervention is taken for breaches of the policy.

Colleges should also ensure:

- Effective dissemination of the common alcohol policy and a comprehensive explanation of the rationale behind any change.
- Clear and unequivocal procedures for policy violations and a commitment on the part of staff to ensure, where there is a breach, appropriate action is taken
- Strong leadership from all Heads of Colleges as they facilitate and manage cultural change.

The Project Team notes the importance of policy enforcement and preparation of clear guidelines to enunciate the consequences for students who violate the new policies. As recommended by the Maryland Collaborative to reduce college drinking and related problems:

*The enforcement of alcohol policies is part of an effective prevention strategy when it convinces those targeted that they will be apprehended and punished if they violate the law. Deterrence requires the perception that violations will lead to certain, swift, and appropriately severe punishment. Of the three legs of the deterrence theory, colleges and communities should focus on the certainty and swiftness of the punishment, rather than the severity.*¹⁰⁷

Best practice recognises the vital role played by College staff in implementing new directions for the management of alcohol within the College setting:

*The leadership of college presidents and school administrators is crucial to develop appropriate plans, supervise the integration of policies pertaining to different aspects of student life, and ensure consistent enforcement of drinking-related policies.*¹⁰⁸

The Project Team believes that with the implementation of its recommendations on alcohol, the risk to students and property from excessive alcohol consumption will be significantly minimised.

¹⁰⁶ The Project Team heard that 'Roo Courts' can occur in each of the Colleges.

¹⁰⁷ Maryland Collaborative to Reduce College Drinking and Related Problems. (2013). Reducing alcohol use and related problems among college students: A guide to best practices. Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD and the Center on Young Adult Health and Development, University of Maryland School of Public Health, College Park, MD, p. 28.

¹⁰⁸ National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism 2002. 'Changing the culture of campus drinking', Alcohol Alert No. 58. Accessed 6 August 2017, <https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/aa58.htm>.

For the most part, [the staff and students] look out for everyone to ensure their safety and comfort. This has at least been my experience as a new resident.

– College Student

Chapter 5: Safety

Safety in the College environment, both psychological and physical, was a key theme in discussions with students and in the Survey. The transition from home into even semi-independent living, can be daunting for many. A sense of safety is therefore critical to students settling successfully into and remaining in College.

In examining safety at each College, students commented on a range of issues, including:

- Safety to speak out or to express views different to the majority.
- Peer pressure and exclusion.
- Bullying and intimidation.
- Practices that may be construed as hazing or unsafe.
- Sexual harassment or sexual assault.

Each of these issues is complex and multifaceted. All have the potential to impact upon students' physical, emotional, mental and psychological health in a variety of ways and can, in turn, influence academic achievement, social interactions and, for some, their life trajectory.

At the outset, it is important to note that most students, across all five Colleges told the Project Team that they feel safe and secure at their College:

I think we have one of the safest Colleges on the campus. When you walk through the doors, you automatically feel you're home, and you are safe.

I do think [my College] provides a safe and supportive environment. We are a community who looks after each other.

Not once have I questioned my safety at [this College]. Part of the reason I chose the College was because of this.

I feel safe in every sense at [College]. I feel both safe to be myself and I don't ever feel in any danger.

When asked to agree or disagree with the statement 'I don't always feel safe at College (including physical and emotional safety)', 7% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Of the students who said they felt unsafe at College (n=75), the most common reasons for feeling this way were due to the drinking culture or binge drinking (31%), violent, aggressive or intimidating behaviour (23%), and feelings of exclusion and/or social isolation (19%).

Students across each College provided examples in the Survey of what makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable. These included:

- Hazing.
- Drinking behaviours of boys getting rough.
- Pressure to have sex if boys are really drunk.
- Jokes that go too far.
- Public embarrassment about private matters.
- [Peer support members] opening the doors to student's rooms without asking.
- Bullying from senior students.
- Tipping of personal belongings in rooms.
- Bullying people into hooking up on the dance floors of College bars and then taking pictures to be shown at a 'debrief' the next day.

The following section discusses issues of safety with regards to students at the Colleges. It also explores the issue of disclosure and reporting by students.

5.1 Psychological safety

Feeling comfortable to speak out and express views that differ from the majority is key to an individual's sense of psychological safety. Psychological safety enables individuals in an organisation to be comfortable opening up to their colleagues or peers and taking risks. Austin defines psychological safety as the collective belief of how team members and leaders respond when another member 'puts themselves on the line', by asking a question, reporting an error, or raising a difficult issue.¹⁰⁹ Austin states:

While certain individual traits (such as introversion) may cause apprehension to put oneself out there, frequent silence in groups is typically the result of perceived heightened interpersonal risk to voice concerns, or, low psychological safety.¹¹⁰

In discussion groups and interviews, students across each of the Colleges discussed the issue of psychological safety. There was a strong sense that the College environment makes students feel at ease and they were comfortable speaking out and expressing their views:

We are a microcosm of society so we all have different views. The different views are respected and I think people feel ok about sharing things that may not be what a majority thinks. Everyone is respectful of their opinions.

I never feel that I cannot express how I think or feel.

[My College] encourages us to debate and discuss issues, to express our views and to listen to the views of others.

I feel as if [my College] is a very safe environment and I feel as though I have found a safe place where I am able to voice concerns without criticism and I feel as if [my College] is a family away from home.

However, an inability to speak out for fear of being either dismissed or ostracised by peers was a theme that also emerged in discussion groups, interviews and the Survey. For instance, students stated:

I feel paralysed by a fear of being ostracised if I speak out.

109 Austin, T 2017, 'Making it Safe: The Importance of Psychological Safety'. Accessed 18 July 2017, <http://www.safetymatters.com/making-it-safe-the-importance-of-psychological-safety/>.

110 *ibid.*

It is not a safe place to come out [as LGBTI] or to be different or express yourself about something that's [different].

I think it is really hard for freshers to speak up about issues. They don't want to be judged particularly by the second and third years.

These comments indicate an opportunity for the College leadership to do more to encourage a genuinely inclusive and psychologically safe environment in which all views and life experiences are welcomed. The issue of psychological safety is explored further in the section on Disclosure and Reporting.

The issue of mental health was raised by students in discussion groups across all of the Colleges. While assessing responses to student's mental health was not within the purview of the Project, the Project Team acknowledges the referral pathways and options provided to students who experience mental health issues or who may suffer psychological or emotional distress. The Project Team also acknowledges the provision of support options to RAs, Deans, Sub-Deans and Corridor Representatives, with the report making recommendations to strengthen this support. Such options are important to ensure these student leaders do not feel overwhelmed by their roles and to minimise their risk of vicarious trauma.

5.2 Bullying, intimidation and 'hazing'

Bullying, intimidation, exclusion, malicious rumours and certain 'traditions' that could be construed as 'hazing' were explored in group and one-on-one discussions and in the Survey. Comments indicated that some of these behaviours were perpetrated in the context of the student hierarchy (discussed in Chapter 2).

Of students surveyed, 13% stated they had experienced 'being excluded or isolated' since starting at the College. Female students were more likely to experience being excluded or isolated (15%) compared to their male counterparts (8%).

Further, 7% of surveyed students reported experiencing 'malicious or hurtful rumours about you'. Undergraduates in their second year or higher at College were more likely to report that they have experienced this (10%) compared to undergraduate freshers (3%).

Of the 16% of students who reported experiencing 'being excluded or isolated' or 'malicious or hurtful rumours', 87% reported those engaged in the behaviour were fellow student(s) from their College; 20% were student(s) from a different University of Sydney College; and 5% were University of Sydney students who were not University of Sydney residents.

Further, 41% stated that they had witnessed or observed College student(s) being 'excluded or isolated' or being the subject of 'malicious or hurtful rumours'.

Nineteen percent of students surveyed reported experiencing 'bullying or intimidation' (6%), 'pressure to participate in activities that were humiliating or intimidating to you or other students' (10%) or 'hazing' (13%) since commencing at College.¹¹¹ Undergraduate students in their second year or higher at College were more likely to report that they experienced these behaviours (24%) compared to first years (15%).

Further, 50% of students surveyed reported that they have witnessed 'bullying or intimidation', 'pressure to participate in activities that were humiliating to them or other students' or 'hazing' of University of Sydney College student(s) since commencing at College.

The issue of so-called 'hazing' was one that emerged in the discussion groups and interviews and was examined further in the Survey. The term 'hazing' was one which students themselves raised and used to refer to practices and activities they had experienced at College. It is important to note that examples that were referred to as hazing were not at the most extreme end of hazing behaviours. So-called hazing can often be associated with a belief that such practices are associated with the traditions and rituals of an institution. Hazing has been defined as:

...any action taken or any situation created intentionally that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule and risks emotional and/or physical harm to members of a group or team, whether new or not, regardless of the person's willingness to participate.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

¹¹² Hazingprevention.org 'What hazing looks like'. Accessed 10 July 2017, <http://hazingprevention.org/home/hazing/facts-what-hazing-looks-like>.

A number of US universities and residential colleges have expressly outlawed hazing practices or practices that fall within the definitions below. Examples are:

- Harvard University: *The term 'hazing,' under Massachusetts law, means: 'any conduct or method of initiation...which wilfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person'... Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action. The failure to report hazing also is illegal, under Massachusetts law.*¹¹³
- University of Michigan: *Hazing is any action or situation, with or without the consent of the participants, which recklessly, intentionally, or unintentionally endangers the mental, physical, or academic health or safety of a student.*¹¹⁴
- Princeton University: *Any student shall have the right to be free of all activities which might constitute hazing, while attempting to become a member of, or maintain membership in, a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, student organization...or other organization. Organizations, their members, and their prospective members are prohibited from engaging in or encouraging others to engage in activities that are defined as hazing...Where an activity amounts to hazing, a person's consent to the activity is not a defense. In order to encourage students who may hesitate to report incidents of hazing for fear of revealing other policy violations, the University may offer leniency to a reporting student with respect to the behavior reported, depending on the circumstances involved.*¹¹⁵

Researchers Keating, Pomerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller and McCormick further observe that hazing or initiations may:

*...include activities perceived to be fun and rewarding, physically and emotionally demanding, embarrassing, socially deviant, degrading, painful, and sometimes dangerous or brutal. The activities designed for newcomers typically adhere to highly prescribed protocols defined by group traditions.*¹¹⁶

In attempting to understand the perpetuation of hazing or activities that may generate unacceptable risk, researchers suggest that the practice serves a number of purposes such as generating group cohesion; serving as an expression of dominance; passing on traditions; and (within the context of sporting/athletic teams) allowing for the selection of committed group members.^{117, 118} Waldron suggests that first years participate in hazing to demonstrate their willingness to accept and conform to College norms, gain social acceptance, and demonstrate their commitment regardless of the pain they may have to endure.¹¹⁹

Further research notes that within the university residential college context, common characteristics of hazing include power differentials, based on hierarchy and social dominance between 'freshers' and more senior students; intentional initiation rites usually based upon college-specific traditions and rituals; and the consent and/or willingness of students to participate.¹²⁰ In many instances, alcohol and other substance abuse is a common feature of hazing rituals.¹²¹

113 Harvard University 2017, 'Hazing – College Policy on Hazing', Harvard College Handbook for Students 2017–2018. Accessed 19 September 2017, <https://handbook.fas.harvard.edu/book/hazing>.

114 University of Michigan n.d. 'What is Hazing?'. Accessed 19 September 2017, <https://deanofstudents.umich.edu/article/what-hazing>.

115 Princeton University, n.d. 'Princeton's Hazing Policy'. Accessed 19 September 2017, <https://odus.princeton.edu/community-standards/hazing/princeton's-hazing-policy>.

116 Keating, C, Pomerantz, J, Pommer, S, Ritt, S, Miller, L & McCormick, 2005, 'Going to College and Unpacking Hazing: A Functional Approach to Decoding Initiation Practices Among Undergraduates', *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, Vol. 9, No. 2, p. 105.

117 Diamond, A, Callahan, S, Chain K & Solomon, G 2016, 'Qualitative review of hazing in collegiate and school sports: Consequences from a lack of culture, knowledge and responsiveness', *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 50: pp. 149–153. Accessed 21 July 2017, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26675087>.

118 Waldron, J 2015, 'Predictors of mild hazing, severe hazing and positive initiation rituals in sport', *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching* 10, pp. 1089–1101.

119 *ibid.*

120 Hazingprevention.org, op. cit.

121 Diamond, A, Callahan, S, Chain K & Solomon G, op. cit.

The literature shows that hazing can include a spectrum of behaviours from serious to others that may be considered minor.¹²²

Many students from across all Colleges reported positive engagement in certain group activities despite referring to them as hazing. College students told the Project Team in discussions and through the Survey:

I have never seen anyone forced into anything – if anyone is slightly hesitant then the hazing/ pressure immediately stops, and no one judges a person for their decision.

I have seen instances of hazing but it is never forced. Leaders will only select students that they know...would be willing to participate in the acts. It never involves intimidation. The participants seem more than willing to take part and I am sure they would never be forced or intimidated if they decided they didn't want to do it at the time.

I was expecting US-style rituals but it was nothing like that.

With the hazing, I believe that it was a good experience and necessary that minor hazing occurred on O Week. The [leaders] were very supportive and never crossed any boundaries.

The hazing was fun. It makes us all come together as a group. I guess you could say it was bonding through suffering.

Students reported that during O Week the leaders/mentors within the College community would reassure them that they did not have to participate in activities that made them feel uncomfortable:

My [leader] always tells me, 'if you don't want to do it, just tell me and then I tell those guys not to do it to you'.

The [leaders] were very supportive and never crossed any boundaries. Students always had a choice and were never explicitly forced to do anything.

Despite students' perceived positive associations with hazing, Diamond et al. concluded that:

...hazing is an inappropriate and misguided example of a traditional initiation where the focus should be on team building as opposed to victimisation.¹²³

It is important to note that Colleges have strengthened efforts to prohibit so-called hazing activities. As one student commented:

[My College] has worked hard to remove aspects of behaviour which are humiliating or threatening.

Nevertheless, the Project Team was told by students of a number of practices which continue and which carry some risk. Many of these practices are inextricably linked to drinking. The Project Team acknowledges that for many students, some of these activities are fun and they are undertaken in the spirit of enjoyment, not humiliation. However, for others, these activities and behaviours can be distressing. Further, some of these activities are not consistent with the values of the Colleges.

122 The academic literature identifies extreme hazing behaviours including: Physical: head shaving, tattooing, beating, branding and whipping; forced consumption of (unsafe) food, urine, alcohol or drugs; being kidnapped, transported or abandoned; or any other forced physical activity that may adversely affect the physical health and safety of the student; Mental/psychological: sleep deprivation; wearing embarrassing clothing or make up; being screamed at; being tied up or confined; name-calling; forced exclusion from social contact; being required to remain silent; being required to memorise and keep secret special songs and histories meant to distinguish the group from the larger society; forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment or humiliation; and other forced activities which could affect the dignity and mental health of the student; Sexual: forced public nudity, engaging in or simulating sexual acts. See *National Collaborative for Hazing Research and Prevention n.d.* 'What is hazing?'. Accessed 10 July 2017, <http://www.stophazing.org>; Campo, S, Poulos, G & Sipple, JW 2005, 'Prevalence and profiling: Hazing among college students and points of intervention', *American Journal of Health Behavior*, 29, pp. 137–149; Diamond, A, Callahan, S, Chain K & Solomon G, op. cit.

123 Diamond, A, Callahan, S, Chain K & Solomon G, op. cit.

Students and recent alumni stated, for example:

During our [2016] O Week, [there was a] presentation of recap slideshows from the previous night showing pictures of girls hooking up with boys. They were not presented in a slut shaming way nor aimed at humiliation but I assume some people would have been made uncomfortable.

Traditions such as Roo Court have prevented me from wanting to join sports teams during my time at College.

I feel pressured to partake in activities I don't find enjoyable. If I choose not to partake, some students use that against me.

There are situations where individuals are degraded and pressured to drink excessive alcohol. Although there is always an 'opt out' option, I think the social pressure of the idea reduces the flexibility of this option.

Younger students are forced into dangerous and uncomfortable positions in order to try to earn the 'respect'...of older residents.

5.2.1 Best practice responses to hazing and orientation

Studies in the United States and the United Kingdom have established best practice standards on the management and prevention of hazing and other orientation rituals that can cause harm to students. Hazing behaviours are not exclusive to residential colleges but can occur in any student group at university, with a higher reported incidence in sports-related groups.

Allan and Madden's 2008 National Study of Student Hazing is the most comprehensive survey to date of hazing at American tertiary institutions.¹²⁴ There is some similarity between the most frequent behaviours identified as hazing in that study and orientation activities reported by College students to the Project Team. Allan and Madden's examples include:

- Drinking games.
- Drinking to the point of getting sick or blackout.
- Chanting songs publicly and out of context.
- Sleep deprivation.
- Being shouted at and/or called names by senior students.
- Games designed to humiliate participants or outsiders to the group.¹²⁵

For the students in Allan and Madden's study, participation in these activities was higher for males and for participants who were athletes.

Four key themes to combat hazing and promote student safety emerge from the evidence:

1. Hazing should be banned through clear policies which communicate zero tolerance for hazing or any other behaviour that compromises student safety.¹²⁶ The policy must be clearly communicated, easily accessible, and include definitions and examples of hazing and related misconduct.
2. Comprehensive education about hazing and alternatives to it must be provided for all students and be communicated to the university community broadly. This education should be grounded in interpersonal ethics and an understanding of group power dynamics. It should include the definition of hazing, the reasons that people engage in hazing, and how to recognise and avoid it. It should also offer examples of alternative, safe and inclusive rituals that build group identity and cohesion. Anti-hazing education should be reinforced over time rather than delivered in a single presentation.

124 Allan, EJ & Madden, M 2008, 'Hazing in View: College Students at Risk', *National Study of Student Hazing*, p. 36.

125 *ibid.*, p. 18.

126 Multiple institutions, including the National Pledging Standards for Fraternities and Sororities, have banned hazing. See Universities UK 2016, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

3. Victims must be supported, including through appropriate reporting options and discipline for perpetrators.
4. The policy must be supported by institutional leadership that:
 - Models values.
 - Enforces and is accountable for the implementation of its policies.
 - Works in concert with students. It is critical that leadership implements hazing prevention carefully, in conversation with students, in order to avoid a backlash.

These four themes are discussed in detail below.

A. Anti-hazing policy

To implement cultural change, zero tolerance for hazing must be supported by a policy that clearly communicates the definitions of hazing and that illustrates these with examples of hazing behaviours.

The Project Team acknowledges that the lines between positive activities, on the one hand, and those that may be considered hazing, on the other, can be blurred, particularly when injury or harm is not obvious, when extreme forms of hazing are not evident and when consent by participants is given. This ambiguity can be compounded when organisations, including Colleges, do not provide a clear definition of what constitutes hazing. As a result, it can be difficult to separate or ‘unpack’ activities that might legitimately and positively challenge and connect students and those that present risk of harm or can be humiliating. Far from wishing to eliminate activities that are positive and affiliative, the Project Team believes that Colleges and their students, in particular, would benefit from identifying and then reforming those activities that pose risk.

Each of the Colleges expressly prohibits behaviours such as bullying, intimidation, harassment and victimisation, in policies and Codes of Conduct. Some Colleges also penalise bystanders or those who have a ‘passive’ role in such behaviours. There are some very strong elements in each of the College’s policies and codes, particularly in relation to their approaches and responses to bullying and harassment. They are explicit and make clear the Colleges’ zero-tolerance approach to these behaviours.

To strengthen understanding and responses to hazing and similar practices, the Project Team proposes that each College’s policies on bullying and harassment should also explicitly include provisions that prohibit hazing or any other behaviours that compromise students’ physical or psychological safety and well-being. The provisions should include a clear definition and scope of hazing behaviours.

Princeton University’s proposal for alternatives to initiation and student affiliative activities is instructive:

*Any new member initiation process should be conducted in a manner that respects the dignity of new members and protects their mental and physical well-being. Examples of acceptable behavior include the promotion of scholarship or service, the development of leadership or social skills or of career goals, involvement with alumni, building an awareness of organizational history, development of a sense of solidarity with other organization members, or activities that otherwise promote the mission of the organization or of the University.*¹²⁷

A number of US universities and colleges have developed ‘myths and facts’ guides on hazing for students and staff. These are instructive guides to assist students and staff better understand what hazing is and its impact. Elements of a guide prepared by Cornell University, adapted in part from stophazing.org are reproduced in the box below:¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Princeton University, n.d., op. cit.

¹²⁸ Cornell University, n.d., ‘Myths about Hazing’. Accessed 21 July 2017, <https://hazing.cornell.edu/issues/myths.cfm>.

Myth: The definition is so vague that anything can be considered hazing – it's really open to interpretation.

Reality: Read the definition and then ask yourself the following questions:

- Does the activity involve mental distress such as humiliation or intimidation?
- Does it involve physical abuse (e.g. sleep deprivation)?
- Is there a significant risk of injury or a question of safety?
- Would you have any reservations describing the activity to your parents or a university official?
- Is alcohol involved?
- Would you be worried if the activity was shown on the evening news?
- If the answer to any of the above questions is 'Yes', the activity is probably hazing.

Myth: New members want to be hazed.

Reality: Occasionally there are new members who say they want to be hazed. But generally most do not want to be humiliated, intimidated or physically abused. 'Wanting' to be hazed usually means desiring an intense, challenging experience. It is not necessary to haze new members in order to challenge them.

Myth: Hazing only 'a little bit' is not really that bad.

Reality: While there are more and less severe forms of hazing, even low-level hazing crosses the line. Even a 'little' hazing can have an unintended negative impact on new members. And if the action meets the definition of hazing, the group will get in trouble if caught.

Myth: Hazing builds unity among new members.

Reality: Hazing may create unity among new members, but often there are costs as well. The effect of hazing on a group can be like the effect of a hurricane on a community: residents feel closer to each other afterward but some may be suffering. Would anyone suggest that it is good for a community to be hit by a hurricane?

Myth: Hazing is the only method for holding new members accountable.

Reality: While holding new members accountable may be important, there are effective ways to do so without hazing. Effective parents, teachers and bosses all know ways to hold others accountable without humiliating, degrading or physically hurting them. These skills can be learned.

Myth: Hazing is okay as long as it is not physically dangerous.

Reality: Mental hazing can be brutal and leave lasting psychological scars. Some hazing victims report that the mental hazing they endured was worse than being physically abused.

Myth: Hazing is a way to improve the attitude and character of a new member.

Reality: Hazing often generates anger and resentment. Plus it teaches that 'values' such as deception, coercion and intimidation are acceptable means for achieving your goals.

Myth: A little hazing should be okay, as long as there's no mean-spirited or injurious intent.

Reality: Regardless of intent, some group bonding activities designed to be 'all in good fun' still may raise some serious safety concerns. For example, serious accidents have occurred during scavenger hunts. And when members are drunk, they sometimes subject the new members to more than they originally intended.

Myth: Hazing continues because everyone in the group supports it.

Reality: Many group members may not approve of hazing but go along with the activity because they mistakenly believe everyone else agrees with it. This 'reign of error' helps to perpetuate hazing. The strongest supporters of hazing are often the most vocal and dominant members.

Myth: If someone agrees to participate in an activity, it can't be considered hazing.

Reality: In states that have laws against hazing, consent of the victim can't be used as a defense. This is because even if someone agrees to participate in a potentially hazardous action, it may not be true consent because of peer pressure, intentional or unintentional threats, and the withholding of information about what will occur.

Myth: Since alumni and current members were hazed, it is only fair that the new members go through it too.

Reality: 'Tradition' does not justify subjecting new members to abuse. Traditions are created by groups, and groups hold the power to change or eliminate them. It only takes one year to break a hazing tradition. Remember that the founding members of organizations were not hazed.

Myth: Eliminating hazing makes an organization just like any other social club. It will be too easy to become a member.

Reality: Hazing is not necessary for an initiation experience to be challenging and unique. A well-organized, creative program will build group cohesion and foster character development. Any group can haze new members – that's the easy way out. It takes vision and commitment to run a good, non-hazing program.

Myth: Enduring hazing is a sign of strength.

Reality: While it does take a certain strength to make it through hazing, many people submit to it because they desire acceptance by others, are afraid to resist, or feel a need to prove to themselves or others that they are worthy or tough enough (e.g. 'a real man'). These motives reflect conformity, fear and insecurity, which are not qualities typically associated with strength. In contrast, standing up to a group of abusive peers or breaking free from hazing takes courage. That's real strength.

Myth: Hazing is really just a prank that goes wrong.

Reality: Accidents can happen during hazing, but hazing is not accidental. It is premeditated abuse that can be emotionally traumatic, physically dangerous, or even life-threatening.

Myth: Hazing practices preserve the uniqueness and exclusiveness of the group.

Reality: Since hazing practices are secret, group members often don't realize that their 'unique' practices are typically variations on common themes: extensive memorization with verbal abuse for incorrect answers, sleep deprivation, servitude, kidnappings, drinking rituals, calisthenics, line-ups, cleaning up messes, isolation of members, theft, impossible games, sexual embarrassment, inappropriate clothing, absurd scavenger hunts, unpalatable food and physical violence.

Myth: Other groups on campus will not respect an organization that does not haze.

Reality: A positive, educational program will result in a better all-around organization and the ability to attract the best new members. Being able to recruit the best students will earn the respect of other groups.

The majority of US states have laws against hazing, and many tertiary education institutions there base their anti-hazing policies on those laws. The result is a powerful message about the gravity of hazing behaviours. Babson College and Yale University are among the tertiary institutions that have implemented such policies.^{129,130} Both of these institutions have web pages dedicated to information about hazing including their policies, their prevention programs, and the state law, and demonstrate how their policy acts in concert with and responds to that law. In the Australian context, anti-hazing policies could be couched in terms of state laws about harassment and bullying.

B. Education

In order for anti-hazing policies to be effective, students need to understand why hazing, from the most extreme to perceived milder practices, is a problem. As the Universities UK Taskforce found:

*...to be agents of change in a culture that can be accepting of...negative behaviours, students and others need to believe that this culture is inappropriate. This often requires attitude change which is a gradual process.*¹³¹

In Allan and Madden's study, many students believe hazing is important for building group identity and cohesion. Yet, of students who have been 'hazed', more than two-thirds do not experience positive outcomes. Instead, their experiences of hazing are largely negative.¹³²

It is critical, therefore, to provide education for all students about hazing which includes its definition and meanings as well as the serious, sometimes life-threatening consequences it can have for those who experience it. Students should be trained in how to recognise hazing and how to safely avoid being part of it. Hazing education should also include information about the dynamics of power so that students learn about how hierarchies are created and their own roles in that process. In this way, students recognise that they are part of and have responsibility in their community.

To be most effective, prevention education should begin early, ideally during the student orientation period, and be refreshed annually. Orientation leaders should be educated about hazing and their own roles in providing safe initiation rituals.

It is also important for hazing prevention education that the host institution recommends and supports alternative initiation rituals which are safe and inclusive. Alternatives listed on hazing prevention websites, such as those of Babson College and Yale, include community service, athletic competitions, and team-building infrastructure projects.

Meanwhile, residential colleges at Rhodes University in South Africa provide a model for the efficacy of hazing prevention education and alternative rituals. In response to problematic hazing during their orientation week, new guidelines were set which recommended that orientation week student leaders be given annual training dedicated to 'initiation' and its potential problems, and that the education make students 'aware of their power and the potential for unwitting peer pressure to be applied'.¹³³ As a result, orientation week leaders removed hazing behaviours and new students experienced an overwhelmingly positive and inclusive orientation week.

Importantly, alternatives to hazing cannot include alcohol consumption for new members. In this, Babson College's hazing prevention initiative recognises the problematic role alcohol plays in many orientation and initiation practices and models institutional support for safe drinking.

129 Babson College, n.d. 'Babson College's Hazing Policy'. Accessed 13 November 2017, <http://www.babson.edu/student-life/community-standards/hazing/Pages/babson-college%27s-hazing-policy.aspx>.

130 Yale University, n.d. Yale College 'Policy against hazing'. Accessed 13 November 2017, <https://yalecollege.yale.edu/deans-office/policies/policy-against-hazing>.

131 Universities UK 2016, op. cit., p. 33.

132 Allan, EJ and Madden, M 2008, op. cit., p. 27.

133 de Klerk, V 2013, op. cit., p. 99.

C. Support for victims and reporting

Victims of hazing and related misconduct must be supported, including through confidential and other reporting options. Students who breach anti-hazing policy must be disciplined accordingly. Support and reporting options are discussed in more detail in the section below on sexual misconduct.

D. Accountable leadership that works with students

For hazing prevention initiatives to work, institutional leadership must enforce its policies, be accountable, and respond quickly to policy breaches. It is important for leadership to communicate the institution's values clearly, and to 'model an inclusive and respectful community where new students can feel a sense of belonging and connectedness'.¹³⁴ The institution should develop systems to check and evaluate the effectiveness of its efforts.¹³⁵

When institutional leadership works collaboratively with students, the results have greater impact.¹³⁶ This finding aligns with recommendations that hazing prevention policies be implemented carefully and with student involvement. Otherwise there is a risk that students will react negatively, including through 'increased hazing and/or decreased reporting of hazing behaviours'.¹³⁷ The Colleges have already demonstrated their strong willingness to work with students by involving them centrally in the cultural renewal Project.

5.3 Sexual misconduct

There has been considerable media attention, both in Australia and overseas, on sexual misconduct¹³⁸ in residential college settings. Incidents ranging from sexism and misogyny right through to sexual harassment and sexual assault have been reported with some reports resulting in policy changes at Colleges, including the implementation of stronger disciplinary and accountability measures.

While there have been several surveys of university students' experience of sexual harassment and sexual assault, these surveys offer limited insights into the experience of residential college students.^{139, 140, 141} It is important to note as well, that the results of those surveys are not comparable to the Survey administered for this Project given the different population groups and variations in the survey instrument. Comparisons regarding prevalence rates of sexual misconduct, therefore, cannot be drawn.

134 Senate Orientation Activities Review Board 2016, 'Orientation Week Policy Manual', Queens University. Accessed 19 September 2017, <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.uslccwww/files/files/policies/senateandtrustees/SOARBmanual2016.pdf>.

135 Allan, EJ & Madden, M 2008, op. cit., p. 36.

136 Universities UK 2016, op. cit., p. 32.

137 Campo, S, Poulos, G & Sipple, JW 2005, op. cit., p. 147.

138 The term sexual misconduct is used to refer to behaviours such as sexual assault, indecent assault or sexual harassment.

139 A 2016 survey of on-campus sexual misconduct at the University of Sydney found 3.4% of respondents reported experiencing sexual harassment with an additional 6.1% reporting being stalked. Less than 2% reported more extreme sexual misconduct: 1.3% sexual assault and 0.4% rape. University of Sydney 2016, *Creating a safer community for all: Sexual harassment and assault on campus*. University of Sydney

140 An Australia-wide survey conducted by the National Union of Students found that 72.7% of respondents had experienced some form of sexual harassment or unwelcomed sexual behaviour (though not necessarily while on campus) with over one-half of those incidents being carried out by fellow students. A total of 27% of survey respondents indicated they had experienced some form of sexual assault while enrolled at university. National Union of Students 2015, *Talk about it: NUS Women's Department 2015 survey*. Accessed 19 July 2017, https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/nus/pages/144/attachments/original/1454369041/Talk_about_it_Survey_Report.pdf?1454369041.

141 The Australian Human Rights Commission and University Australia 2016/17 survey found 3.8% of female students of University of Sydney had experienced sexual assault in a university setting in 2015 or 2016 compared to 0.4% of male University of Sydney students. Further 40% of female and 17% male University of Sydney students experienced being sexually harassed in a university setting in 2015 or 2016. Australian Human Rights Commission 2017b, 'University student sexual assault and sexual harassment survey – Notes on reading institutional-level data'. Accessed 13 November 2017, <http://sydney.edu.au/dam/corporate/documents/about-us/values-and-visions/respect-now-always-report-university-of-sydney.pdf>. Further, through the National Survey results, the Commission identified colleges as a location with a relatively high prevalence of sexual assault in particular, but also sexual harassment. 12% of women and 3% of men who were sexually assaulted at university in 2015 and/or 2016 said that it occurred at a residential college or hall. Students who lived at college in 2015 or 2016 were also at higher risk than other university students of being sexually assaulted or sexually harassed. Overall, 7% of students who completed the survey were living at university owned or affiliated accommodation. However, 14% of those who were sexually harassed and 34% of those who were sexually assaulted were living in university owned or affiliated residential accommodation at the time. Australian Human Rights Commission 2017, op.cit., p.187.

The following sections explore College students' experience of sexual harassment and sexual assault. The issue of sexual misconduct at Colleges was explored in discussion groups and during one-on-one interviews. Students were keen to share their views on the issue, and in some cases, their personal experiences with sexism, sexual harassment and sexual assault. A strong theme emerging was that women at College experience greater levels of these behaviours than men.

The various forms of violence experienced by women across the community are considered to lie along a continuum of intensity and harm.^{142, 143} Common abuses women experience such as leering, catcalls and verbal assaults, lie at one end of this continuum, while the less common forms of abuse such as rape and sexual assault lie at the other extreme.¹⁴⁴ This concept of a continuum demonstrates the way in which behaviours often considered harmless (at least by those who display these behaviours) are linked with more abusive forms of violence against women. Originally the concept was used only to explain men's attempts to control women through abuse, force and coercion. Over time, however, the concept of a continuum has been broadened and is now applied to all power-based, interpersonal abuse including that experienced by men and those in the LGBTI community. Nevertheless, sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment and sexual assault, are gendered behaviours with research showing that the vast majority of victims/survivors are women and the majority of perpetrators, men.

While the vast majority of students have positive experiences at College, students spoke of experiencing sexism and sexist remarks from other students. Of students surveyed, 10% experienced sexist remarks directed at them. Female students were significantly more likely to report experiencing this (14%) compared to their male counterparts (2%).

Further, undergraduate female students in their second year or higher at College were more likely to report this (20%) than undergraduate female freshers (8%). The majority of students engaged in the behaviour were fellow students from their College (66%), while 44% of the student(s) engaged in the behaviour were student(s) from a different University of Sydney College, and 15% were University students who were not a University of Sydney College resident. 29% of students reported that they had witnessed or observed sexist remarks directed at other College students.

Students stated:

Fresher boys want to impress the older boys so they degrade the girls.

College is heading in the right direction, but there is still a culture of sexism in some 'groups'. Whether or not it is more pronounced here than in general society is hard to say.

I truly love [my College] – it was the best decision I have ever made to come here. However, I do have concerns about the latent sexism that exists within the College. Some of the young men (and women to some extent) here appear unaware that their comments/behaviours are sometimes extremely sexist. I'm not sure how this issue can be addressed but [the College] would be an even more wonderful place if this could be worked on.

I do believe that sexist remarks, particularly from male students, either in person or on social media, contribute to a subtle but very real chauvinist attitude towards women at the College.

On all of the occasions I have witnessed any harmful behaviour or harassment it appears to have a 'pack' mentality, wherein the group of people feed off each other and influence each other in these behaviours, particularly sexist comments towards women.

If I ever retaliate to a sexist comment, I am often met with a comment to the effect of 'this is the problem with women – they can't take a joke'.

As has been discussed earlier, some students, particularly female students, reported to the Project Team that they felt physically unsafe in College settings when fellow students have been drinking to excess. The role played by alcohol in sexual misconduct is well recognised. The Project Team anticipates that the introduction of revised procedures for the serving of alcohol within Colleges, as recommended in this report, will go some way to addressing the role which alcohol plays in sexual misconduct.

142 Kelly, L 1987 'The continuum of sexual violence', in J Hammer & M Maynard (eds), *Women, violence and social control*. New Jersey: Humanities Press International.

143 Leidig, M 1995, 'The continuum of violence against women: Psychological and physical consequences', *Journal of American College Health*, 40, pp. 149–155.

144 Kelly, L 1987, op cit.

A further theme that arose was the impact on female students of behaviours of certain groups of male students, particularly when those students were intoxicated. Those who spoke to the Project Team identified these males as being associated with a sporting code and when together, behaved with a 'pack mentality'. Their practices were identified as being 'hypermasculine' – behaviours that reflect a negatively exaggerated portrayal of stereotypical masculinity, including demeaning attitudes and actions. In interviews, male students also spoke of elements of a culture where hypermasculinity is dominant and rewarded. For these students, there was a view that hypermasculinity was necessary to fit in. Students stated:

The cliques of male sporting teams at college...tend to be the perpetrators of sexual indecency and offensive sexual advances upon others. This is probably a [result] of their drinking culture, which is extremely excessive.

The hypermasculine culture that exists within the college promotes being straight and a jock as what is right.

In the Survey and in individual interviews, students described experiences with sexualised attitudes and behaviours that made them feel unsafe or uncomfortable:

Fresher rating – the girls are given a 1 to 5 rating by some of the boys. It was supposed to have been banned.

The telling of 'soap boxes' – stories about who people got with the night before and how/what positions they used.

Feeling objectified, like a piece of meat on display.

Inappropriate questions about sex life.

Osborne¹⁴⁵ suggests that the concept of viewing sexual misconduct as a continuum is particularly useful in exploring interpersonal violence in the university setting. It is important to recognise that sexual assault can be part of the continuum that starts with sexist comments, misogyny and sexual harassment.

5.3.1 Prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault

Of surveyed students, 19% reported that they had experienced sexual harassment¹⁴⁶ since commencing at College.¹⁴⁷ Women were significantly more likely to report experiencing this, with 25% of women reporting that they have experienced sexual harassment since commencing at College compared to 6% of men.

Of the majority of those that reported experiencing sexual harassment, the harassment either occurred at their College residence or grounds (46%) or at a different University of Sydney College residence or grounds (44%).¹⁴⁸ Further, the majority (83%) reported the harassment occurred during the academic year, while 12% reported it occurred during O Week, and 2% reported it occurred at some other time.

145 Osborne, R 1995, 'The continuum of violence against women in Canadian universities: Toward a new understanding of the chilly campus climate', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 18, pp. 637–646

146 Sexual harassment was defined in the Survey as: 'Sexual harassment is an unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which, in the circumstances, a reasonable person, aware of those circumstances, would anticipate the possibility that the person would feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.' Behaviours that are likely to constitute sexual harassment include: 'unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing'; 'inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated'; 'sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body'; 'sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended'; 'sexually explicit pictures, posters or gifts that made you feel offended'; 'repeated or inappropriate invitations to go out on dates'; 'intrusive questions about your private life or physical appearance that made you feel offended'; 'sexually explicit emails or SMS messages'; 'inappropriate physical contact'; 'repeated or inappropriate advances on email, social networking websites or internet chat rooms'; 'inappropriate commentary, images or film of you distributed on some form of social media without your consent'; 'requests or pressure for sex, or other sexual acts'; and 'any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature (please specify)'.

147 Students who mentioned more than one incident answered for the most recent incident.

148 The remainder occurred at an off-College event organised or endorsed by their College (4%); at some other event or occasion organised by a different College (8%); on the Sydney University campus (4%), on another university campus (3%); or somewhere else (7%). Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

Of those that experienced sexual harassment, 48% reported a fellow student from their College engaged in the behaviour; 48% reported a student(s) from a different College engaged in the behaviour; and 7% reported University of Sydney students who were not University of Sydney College residents engaged in the behaviour.¹⁴⁹ Of those that reported a fellow student from their College engaged in the behaviour, 73% reported the student was in the same or a lower year in College; 35% reported the student was in a more senior year in College; and 1% reported a student in a position of responsibility (e.g. an O Week leader, Dean, Sub-Dean or RA) engaged in the behaviour.¹⁵⁰ The vast majority of those who engaged in the behaviour were male(s) only (85%), with a small number involving both male(s) and female(s) (8%), or females only (5%).¹⁵¹

Importantly, when students were directly asked if they had experienced sexual harassment, 9% indicated they had. However, when a list of behaviours that constitute sexual harassment was presented, 19% of students surveyed reported they had experienced one of more of the behaviours showing a gap in some students' knowledge of what constitutes sexual harassment.

The forms of sexual harassment women reported experiencing included: 'unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing' (13%); 'sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended' (9%); 'inappropriate physical contact' (8%); 'intrusive questions about your private life or physical appearance that made you feel offended' (6%); 'requests or pressure for sex, or other sexual acts' (5%); 'inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated' (6%); 'sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body' (3%); 'repeated or inappropriate invitations to go out on dates' (2%); 'inappropriate commentary, images or film of you distributed on some form of social media without your consent' (2%); and 'repeated or inappropriate advances on email, social networking websites or internet chat rooms' (1%).

The forms of sexual harassment men reported experiencing included: 'sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended' (2%); 'inappropriate physical contact' (2%); 'sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body' (2%); 'unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing' (1%); 'intrusive questions about your private life or physical appearance that made you feel offended' (1%); 'requests or pressure for sex, or other sexual acts' (1%); 'inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated' (1%).

Highlighting the importance of bystanders in responding to sexual harassment, 41% of students reported that they had witnessed or observed sexual harassment of another College student(s).¹⁵² Of the incidents of sexual harassment witnessed or observed, 80% occurred during the academic year, and 10% occurred during O Week. For the majority of those that reported they had witnessed or observed sexual harassment, the harassment either occurred at their College residence or grounds (44%) or at a different University of Sydney College residence or grounds (41%).¹⁵³

Interestingly, in contrast to the data on direct experiences of sexual harassment, and national data on the gender of perpetrators of sexual harassment,¹⁵⁴ the survey revealed a higher proportion of the reported incidences of sexual harassment witnessed or observed involved women. In 47% of the cases, the person engaged in the behaviour was male; in 41% of cases both male(s) and female(s) were involved; and in 4% of cases, it was only women who engaged in the behaviour.

149 1% reported 'other (please specify)'. Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

150 Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

151 Of women who reported they had experienced sexual harassment, 91% reported the person who engaged in the behaviour was male, 5% reported both male(s) and female(s) engaged in the behaviour, and 2% reported women engaged in the behaviour. Of the males who reported they experienced sexual harassment, approximately one-third reported male(s) engaged in the behaviour, one-third reported both male(s) and female(s) engaged in the behaviour, and one-third reported only women engaged in the behaviour.

152 The most common forms of sexual harassment witnessed or observed included, 'sexually suggestive comments or jokes that could be offensive' (23%); 'unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing' (19%); 'inappropriate physical contact' (16%); 'requests or pressure for sex, or other sexual acts' (13%); 'inappropriate commentary, images or film of them distributed on some form of social media without their consent' (12%); 'intrusive questions about someone's private life or physical appearance that could be offensive' (12%); 'inappropriate staring or leering that would be intimidating' (12%); and 'sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body' (11%).

153 The remainder occurred at an off-College event organised or endorsed by their College (5%); at some other event or occasion organised by a different University of Sydney College (12%); on the Sydney University campus (7%); at a University of Sydney event (3%); on another university campus (1%); or somewhere else (1%). Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

154 See for example, Australian Human Rights Commission 2012, op. cit.

The Survey also revealed that 4% of students surveyed reported experiencing actual or attempted sexual assault¹⁵⁵ since commencing at College. Women were significantly more likely to report that they had experienced actual or attempted sexual assault (6%) compared to men (1%). Due to the small number of reported incidents (n=46) the following results should be treated cautiously and as indicative only:

- Almost all of the students who reported experiencing actual or attempted sexual assault were women (91%).
- Just over three-quarters (79%) of incidents happened during the academic year with about one in ten happening during O Week (12%) and less than one in ten outside the academic year (6% of reported cases).
- Approximately half of incidents happened at their College residence or grounds (45%), and about half at a different University of Sydney College residence or grounds (43%). Other places included at other university campuses or in private homes. A small number did not respond to the question.
- In about half of the incidents, student/s from a different University of Sydney College engaged in the behaviour (48%) and in about one-quarter of the incidents, fellow student/s from College engaged in the behaviour (25%). In 16% of cases, non-residential students engaged in the behaviour and a small number of students chose not to answer the question.
- In most incidents, only male students engaged in the behaviour (95%). In a very small number, only female students engaged in the behaviour (5%). Note, in all incidents reported by female students, respondents reported that only males engaged in the behaviour. In the small number of incidents reported by male students, respondents reported that in one-third of incidents, males engaged in the behaviour and in the remainder, women engaged in the behaviour.¹⁵⁶

A further 8% of surveyed students reported they had witnessed or observed 'actual or attempted sexual assault'. Women surveyed were significantly more likely to report this (11%) compared to men surveyed (3%).

5.3.2 Colleges' policy responses to sexual misconduct

Each College has strong elements in their policy responses to sexual misconduct and in many instances their approaches reflect best practice. Details of their policies include:

- **St Andrew's College's** Respectful Relationships policy addresses sexual harassment and sexual assault. It clearly defines both terms and explicitly states that sexual harassment and sexual assault are 'not acceptable and will not be tolerated' and that these activities are 'abuses of power'. The policy clearly articulates where students can seek help. The intent of the policy is unambiguous and clearly articulates that its purpose includes making students aware of the support available to them and setting out the behavioural expectations and legal obligations of students. In addition, the policy informs students of the procedures that the College will follow in responding to a report and makes clear that any adverse experiences are responded to ethically, sensitively, fairly and confidentially and within Australian law. The College also runs respectful relationships lectures during O Week and at the beginning of second semester. Four staff members are Respectful Relationships Officers who may be called upon to undertake an investigation into breaches of the policies.

¹⁵⁵ Sexual assault was defined in the Survey as: 'Sexual assault occurs when a person is forced, coerced, tricked or intimidated into sexual acts against their will or without their consent, including when they have withdrawn their consent. It also includes any attempts to force, coerce, trick or intimidate a person into sexual acts against their will or without their consent. Sexual assault can also occur if you are incapacitated by alcohol or drugs and therefore unable to consent.'

¹⁵⁶ Note, the base size of male students who reported experiencing actual or attempted sexual assault is very small so results should be treated with caution.

- **St John's College's** harassment policy and procedures are found in their Student Code of Conduct which is published in the *Student Handbook*.¹⁵⁷ The policy statement clearly enunciates that the College 'does not tolerate any form of harassment, vilification or victimization' and that it 'maintains a zero tolerance' towards any such activities.¹⁵⁸ In addition to this strong statement of zero tolerance, the policy has several features which the Project Team consider to be examples of best practice. It includes clear definitions of harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, stalking and victimisation, along with examples of actions which could constitute harassment and be in breach of the Code. It also provides details of steps which students can take should they wish to report harassment.
- **Sancta Sophia College's** policies addressing sexual misconduct are interwoven into the College's harassment policies found in their Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct provides a clear definition of sexual harassment, and includes a comprehensive set of examples of behaviours that constitute such harassment. These include 'sexual or suggestive remarks' and 'unwanted sexual propositions' as a form of verbal behaviour that could be considered harassment and 'touching the sexual or other parts of someone else's body' and 'unnecessary physical contact such as pinching, patting, touching, kissing...against their will' as physical behaviour that could amount to harassment. The Code calls on Sancta Sophia College students and staff to uphold and practice the College values including respect, ethical and honest behaviour and personal responsibility.
- **Wesley College's** harassment and discrimination policy and procedure documents indicate that the College has a zero tolerance towards any form of harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment. The policies clearly articulate the College's strong position on ensuring the safety of students and staff. A clear and unambiguous definition of sexual harassment is provided. The policy is underpinned by the College values, regarding Wesley's commitment to a safe and respectful environment. The policy provides information on the complaints process and importantly, refers to issues of confidentiality regarding reports. The policy also highlights the College's commitment to ensuring appropriate communication is maintained with both the complainant and the subject(s) of the complaint during the course of the investigation.
- **The Women's College's** bullying, harassment and discrimination policy includes sexual harassment. The policy document is very comprehensive and includes details of procedures to resolve bullying, harassment and discrimination complaints. The policy includes comprehensive definitions of harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination and, as such, is a good education resource informing students of the breadth of these behaviours. The policy also identifies measures the College will follow to raise students' awareness of bullying, harassment and discrimination. The Women's College makes it clear that preventing these behaviours is a whole-of-College responsibility.

While the policies are very clear on the Colleges' position on sexual harassment, they are less clear on sexual assault. Some policies include sexual assault as a type of sexual harassment, others describe the prohibition of certain behaviours that would come within the scope of sexual assault. The Project Team considers it imperative that sexual misconduct policy statements and Codes of Conduct for all Colleges clearly articulate a zero-tolerance approach to sexual assault and include a clear definition of it.

All the Colleges offer students an education session on sexual misconduct during O Week. According to student feedback and information from the facilitator of these sessions, the sessions focus on the legal aspects and definitions of consent, harassment and assault.

While recognising that many elements of best practice are evident in the Colleges' policies and codes, the following section identifies combined best practice approaches to responding to sexual misconduct.

¹⁵⁷ St John's College (2016). SJC Student Code of Conduct, *Student Handbook*, pp. 55–58.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 56.

5.3.3 Best practice combatting sexual misconduct

Best practice standards for preventing and managing sexual misconduct have been established by international and Australian studies, including those conducted by the White House Task Force; the Universities UK Taskforce; End Rape on Campus Australia (EROC); the Australian Human Rights Centre of the University of New South Wales; and the Australian National Association for Services Against Sexual Violence.¹⁵⁹ These studies are based on university-wide information. However, a number of studies have noted the potential for the increased incidence of sexual misconduct in residential settings.¹⁶⁰ As Armstrong et al. have noted in their study of a residential hall at a Midwestern American research university, residential settings at universities are microcosms of the key structural and cultural factors that enable sexual misconduct on campus, including normalised heavy alcohol consumption and gender hierarchies, or what they call ‘the development of sexualized peer cultures organized around status’.¹⁶¹ For this reason, best practice principles for combatting sexual misconduct broadly are applicable to residential colleges. Indeed, because residential colleges are smaller communities, they have the potential to enact cultural change more quickly, and be a model to their universities.

Five key principles of best practice emerge from the evidence:

1. Residential Colleges should adopt a whole-of-community **integrated and holistic framework for preventing and responding to sexual misconduct**.
2. The institution must have a **stand-alone zero-tolerance policy** about sexual misconduct which is clear, well-communicated and readily accessible. This policy should clearly articulate consequences for any breach.
3. **Survivors must be supported**, including through appropriate reporting options and trauma-informed professional support.
4. Appropriate **evidence-based, education and training** must be provided for staff and for student leaders. Staff and student leaders should be trained in trauma-informed and survivor-centred responses. Sexual misconduct prevention education programs should be grounded in an understanding of gender, other identities and related power dynamics, as well as framed in terms of ethical relationships.
5. Institutions must **implement procedures to ensure transparency and disclosure, and conduct self-assessments to track policy efficacy**.

159 Albury, K, Carmody, M, Evers, C & Lumby, C 2011, ‘Playing by the rules: researching, teaching and learning sexual ethics with young men in the Australian National Rugby League,’ *Sex Education*, 11:3, pp. 339–351; Australian Human Rights Centre 2017 *On Safe Ground: Strengthening Australian University Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment*, University of New South Wales; Carmody, M, Evans, S, Krogh, C, Flood, M, Heenan, M & Ovenden, G 2009, ‘Framing best practice: National Standards for the primary prevention of sexual assault through education’, *National Sexual Assault Prevention Education Project for NASASV*. University of Western Sydney, Australia; Center for Changing Our Campus Culture 2016, ‘Addressing Gender-Based Violence on College Campuses: Guide to a Comprehensive Model’; Culture of Respect 2017, *CORE Blueprint: A Strategic Roadmap for Addressing Campus Sexual Violence*; End Rape on Campus Australia 2017, *Connecting the Dots: Understanding Sexual Assault in University Communities*; Harrell, MC, Werber, L & Castaneda L with Adelson, M, Gaillot, S, Lynch, C & Pomeroy, A 2009, *A Compendium of Sexual Assault Research*, RAND National Defense Research Institute; Keel, M, Tomey, J, Fulu, E, McCook, S, Holmes, S, Hunt, M, Lay, Y & Warczak, C 2017, *Putting the prevention of violence against women into practice: How to change the story*, Our Watch; Quadara A & Wall L 2012, *What is effective primary prevention in sexual assault? Translating the evidence for action*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault; Universities UK 2016, op. cit.

160 Flood, M & Pease, B 2006, *The Factors Influencing Community Attitudes in Relation to Violence Against Women: A Critical Review of the Literature*, VicHealth, pp. 59–60; National Union of Students 2011, *Safe Universities Blueprint: Talk About It Survey, Results and Recommendations*, p. 10; Australian Human Rights Commission 2017 op. cit., p. 186.

161 Armstrong, EA, Hamilton, L & Sweeney, B 2006, ‘Sexual Assault on Campus: A Multilevel, Integrative Approach to Party Rape’, *Social Problems*, 53:4, pp. 483–499.

A. Whole-of-community integrated and holistic framework for preventing and responding to sexual misconduct

Sexual misconduct is a gendered experience, overwhelmingly experienced by women from men, and takes place along a continuum of violence, from sexist remarks to sexual harassment and sexual assault.¹⁶² Successful policies and procedures on sexual misconduct are developed as part of an institution-wide commitment to addressing broader issues on gender inequality, and to promoting diversity, inclusion and non-discrimination. College policies and procedures must therefore form part of, and be integrated within, the broader cultural reform agenda, as well as be inextricably linked to the values of the College community.

Furthermore, Colleges must ensure that the focus of sexual misconduct prevention recognises the critical role played by the College in creating an environment that discourages sexual misconduct, including:

- Creating and renewing a culture and community values of dignity, respect and gender equality.¹⁶³
- Implementing robust policies for responding to sexual misconduct (see below).
- Environmental prevention measures (such as increased or improved lighting and closed circuit television in and around College grounds).¹⁶⁴
- Supporting bystander intervention.¹⁶⁵

Rather than focusing on sexual misconduct prevention at the individual level, a whole-of-community approach which involves all levels of the institution including staff, students, Council and alumni is required.¹⁶⁶

B. Stand-alone zero-tolerance policy that is clear, well-communicated and accessible

Best practice confirms the importance of a stand-alone comprehensive policy on sexual misconduct which explicitly states that sexual harassment and sexual assault are prohibited.¹⁶⁷ Studies demonstrate that fragmented, inconsistent and ad hoc policies and practices can be confusing for students, place an undue burden on them, and result in a negative experience for students who report.¹⁶⁸

Further, the End Rape on Campus Australia report notes that the lack of harmony in policy terms between residential colleges and their host universities can create grey areas for survivors including contradictory reporting systems.¹⁶⁹

At present, most Australian universities, including the University of Sydney, do not have a stand-alone sexual misconduct policy and therefore lag behind best practice standards in the United States and the United Kingdom. This situation is also at odds with recommendations from Australian campaigns and studies including the Australian Human Rights Centre of the University of New South Wales' report *On Safe Ground*.¹⁷⁰

162 Kelly, L 1987, op. cit.

163 Culture of Respect 2017, op. cit.; Leidig, M 1995, op. cit., pp. 149–155

164 Australian Human Rights Centre 2017, op. cit., p. 60.

165 See, for example, MacDonald, P & Flood, M 2012, *Encourage. Support. Act!: Bystander Approaches to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace*; University of New South Wales 2016, op. cit., p. 60.

166 Keel, M et al. 2017, op. cit., p. 81.

167 Australian Human Rights Centre 2017, op. cit., p. 53.

168 *ibid.*

169 End Rape on Campus Australia 2017, op. cit., p. 6.

170 See for example, Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences 2016, 'Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment Policy and Procedures for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Harvard University'; End Rape on Campus has also developed a comprehensive model for building what it calls a 'survivor-centric policy', End Rape on Campus Australia 2017, op. cit.; Australian Human Rights Centre 2017, op. cit.

Best practice standards recommend a comprehensive, clear, detailed policy that is widely communicated and readily available, including on the institution's website. The policy should:

- Expressly prohibit sexual misconduct and make clear the consequences of breaching the policy.¹⁷¹
- Define key terms and concepts, illustrated with relevant examples in order to clarify the meaning of and behaviours that constitute sexual harassment, sexual assault and consent.
- Acknowledge the institution's responsibility to provide a safe and respectful environment for all.
- Articulate expectations that all staff and students in the institution's community play a role in creating a safe and respectful environment.
- Provide clear details on processes for reporting and responding to sexual misconduct, including with specific names and contact details, and how to support someone who has experienced sexual assault.
- Provide clear guidance and a variety of options for survivors/victims to disclose, and to seek support, counselling and health services.

With regard to disciplinary action against alleged perpetrators, a coordinated response between Colleges and the University should be considered where the student and perpetrator are studying on the same campus (see recommendations below).

To ensure that the Colleges are operating within a best practice framework, the Project Team recommends that each College and the University of Sydney should develop, with guidance from an expert in sexual harassment, sexual assault and respectful relationships, a stand-alone policy that addresses sexual misconduct. The stand-alone policies of the Colleges and the University should incorporate the elements outlined above.¹⁷²

C. Trauma-informed survivor support

Research confirms that most cases of sexual misconduct within a College setting go unreported, primarily because students fear consequences and have little confidence in institutional processes.¹⁷³ Furthermore, studies show that a deficient or misguided institutional response to the complex needs of students who are victims of sexual assault and harassment can compound their harm, potentially re-traumatising the survivor, or resulting in them deciding not to lodge a complaint.¹⁷⁴

A clear policy must therefore be complemented with strong survivor-centred support systems which consider the physical, emotional and psychological state of the survivors. This should include:

- Ensuring that information for survivors is readily accessible in a central place, and includes the procedures and timeframes for investigations so they are aware of what to expect from the process.
- Straightforward and accessible reporting processes, including multiple options for reporting which enable survivors to choose the path with which they feel most comfortable. For example, some students may wish to ensure that their experience is registered, but that they do not have to go through a formal process beyond that.
- Staff and students in positions of responsibility for the welfare of students are trained in trauma-informed and survivor-centred responses, and information about internal support and external sexual assault services is readily available.

171 Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences 2016, *op. cit.*, pp. 21–22; Culture of Respect 2017, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–44. For sample language and definitions of sexual misconduct, see White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault 2014, 'Sample Language and Definitions of Prohibited Conduct for a School's Sexual Misconduct Policy', pp. 1–4.

172 The Australian Human Rights Commission recommends that the Vice-Chancellors of all Australian universities establish an advisory body that includes representatives from residential colleges and the student body. See Australian Human Rights Commission 2017, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

173 The Survey found only 3% of students that reported experiencing sexual harassment and only 9% of students that reported experiencing actual or attempted sexual assault made a formal report.

174 Australian Human Rights Commission (2017), *op. cit.*, Chapter 6.3 (f) (i)-(xii).

- Information regarding perpetrator accountability is included in the sexual misconduct policy, and the processes made clear in advance to those reporting. While the College should maintain the principles of due process for the alleged perpetrator, consideration must be given to the affected student, as well as to the safety of other students. Such consideration may mean that an alleged perpetrator is temporarily removed from the College and potentially suspended from the campus.¹⁷⁵
- Complaints should be addressed in an expeditious manner ensuring that survivors are not subjected to protracted processes which will exacerbate the harm and trauma of their experience.¹⁷⁶

D. Prevention education

Best practice standards require that sexual misconduct prevention and education programs are undertaken by all staff and students at all levels of the institution, as well as made integral to the institution's orientation process.¹⁷⁷ This education program must address the root individual, relational and societal causes of sexual assault including:

- Adherence to and acceptance of traditional gender norms.
- Acceptance of violence and other unhealthy attitudes and behaviours in intimate relationships.
- Contributing factors which increase risk, such as drug and alcohol use.
- An individual's own background.¹⁷⁸

These programs should be provided annually for staff and leaders, and all students should receive training at orientation and regular refresher training. The education should:

- Be comprehensive and evidence-based, including a component on sex education and gender education, and bystander intervention (see below).¹⁷⁹
- Be administered by leaders with expertise in sexual misconduct.¹⁸⁰
- Be driven by a clear and articulated rationale and objective.¹⁸¹
- Engage men as allies.¹⁸²
- Be contextually relevant and inclusive, and be customised for specific groups. For example, elite athletes may require targeted training because of their statistically higher perpetration rates.¹⁸³

175 As the On Campus report states, there is a 'need for universities to create and use mechanisms by which alleged perpetrators can be excluded from certain or all premises of the university, and/or from classes, on an interim basis while a formal complaints process is ongoing. For example, an alleged perpetrator could be temporarily excluded from a residence where the survivor lives pending a final decision about the complaint. Like bail conditions in criminal law, such mechanisms could be initiated without a full investigation taking place and be engaged where deemed necessary to protect the survivor and/or other students.' End Rape on Campus Australia 2017, op. cit., p. 43.

176 End Rape on Campus Australia 2017, op. cit., pp. 48–49; Center for Changing Our Campus Culture 2016, op. cit., p. 21. See also Jewkes, R, Sen, P & Garcia-Moreno, C 2002, 'Sexual Violence', in EG Krug, LL Dahlberg, JA Mercy, AB Zwi & R Lozano (eds.), *World Report on Violence and Health*, Geneva: World Health Organization, pp. 147–181; and Culture of Respect 2017, op. cit., p. 15.

177 DeGue, S et al. note that 'Fewer than 10% [of prevention education programs] included content to address factors beyond the individual level, such as peer attitudes, social norms, or organizational climate and policies, despite evidence that relationship and contextual factors are also important in shaping risk for sexual violence perpetration', DeGue, S, Valle, L, Holt, MK, Massetti, GM, Matjasko, JL & Teten Tharp, A 2014, 'A systematic review of primary prevention strategies for sexual violence perpetration', *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 19:4, July–August, pp. 346–362.

178 Center for Changing Our Campus Culture 2016, op. cit., p. 21. See also Jewkes, R et al. 2002, op. cit., and Culture of Respect 2017, op. cit., p. 15. 'Fewer than 10% of prevention education programs' included content to address factors beyond the individual level, such as peer attitudes, social norms, or organizational climate and policies, despite evidence that relationship and contextual factors are also important in shaping risk for sexual violence perpetration.'

179 Universities UK 2016, op. cit., p. 58; Haberland, NA 2015, 'The Case For Addressing Gender and Power in Sexuality and HIV Education: A Comprehensive Review of Evaluation Studies', *International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 41:1, March, pp. 31–42; Allen, L & Carmody, M 2012, 'Pleasure has no passport': re-visiting the potential of pleasure in sexuality education', *Sex Education*, 12:4, pp. 455–468.

180 Albury, K, Carmody, M, Evers, & Lumby, C 2011, op. cit., p. 345; End Rape on Campus Australia 2017, op. cit., p. 46. Universities UK 2016, op. cit., p. 35.

181 Culture of Respect 2017, op. cit., p. 46.

182 Albury, K, Carmody, M, Evers & Lumby, C 2011, op. cit., p. 342.

183 Culture of Respect 2017 op. cit; VicHealth 2007, *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*, p. 48

Education programs designed to prevent sexual violence must be combined with sex education and gender education. Haberland has found that there are significantly better outcomes for sex and sexual health education programs when training about sexual misconduct and consent is combined with education on gender and power relations.¹⁸⁴

Similarly, Carmody has demonstrated that ‘an artificial separation of sexuality education from violence prevention education was not helpful to young people.’ She argues instead for ‘greater integration of all aspects of sexuality.’¹⁸⁵ Further, the focus should be on educating young women and young men, so that both share responsibility for sex, rather than the responsibility being assumed to vest in the woman.¹⁸⁶ The shared responsibility removes the pressure on females to be sexual gatekeepers, which in turn could remove the judgement that they have ‘failed’ if they are assaulted.

Best practice also suggests that bystander training is effective in supporting an environment of zero tolerance and in equipping students with the skills to respond appropriately to sexual misconduct when this is witnessed or observed.¹⁸⁷

E. Transparency, disclosure, accountability and self-assessment

Information, including policies and services, should be made publicly available, including on a dedicated webpage. Processes should be established for measuring policy implementation and adherence and to ensuring periodic reviews of policies. Confidential records should be kept in order to track the reporting and management of sexual misconduct, as well as public reports on the number of incidents and how these were resolved.¹⁸⁸ Ongoing evaluation is important to cultural change.¹⁸⁹

5.4 Disclosure and reporting

The literature on disclosure and reporting practices of college students identifies that students are generally cautious about telling someone, particularly someone in authority if they have experienced unacceptable behaviour.

In relation to practices that may be construed as hazing, Campo et al. report that a recent study found that 60% of hazed university athletes indicated that they would not report hazing.¹⁹⁰ They posit that this may be because they believed that they did not engage in hazing, were expressing team loyalty, or did not understand the concept of hazing. The National Union of Students’ survey found a similar trend among Australian university students. In that survey, respondents did not report sexual harassment or assault to a university official (94.5%) or the police (95.2%).¹⁹¹

The research is clear that reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault is particularly low right across society. It is also particularly low among young women. US Research on the reporting behaviours of college students in relation to sexual assault found that survivors did not report the incident because:

- They said they did not have proof that the incident occurred.
- They were afraid of retaliation by the perpetrator.
- They were scared of hostile treatment by the authorities.
- They were uncertain the authorities would consider the incident serious enough.
- They wanted to prevent family and others from learning about it.

184 Haberland, NA 2015, ‘The Case For Addressing Gender and Power in Sexuality and HIV Education: A Comprehensive Review of Evaluation Studies’, *International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 41:1, March, pp. 31–42.

185 Allen, L & Carmody, M 2012, op. cit., pp. 455–468.

186 Carmody, M, 2013, ‘Young Men, Sexual Ethics and Sexual Negotiation’, *Sociological Research Online*, 18(2) 22, p. 794. Carmody has developed an evidence-based Sex and Ethics Violence Prevention Program that acknowledges the agency young people have in sexual relationships, puts the specifics they get taught into a gendered context, and ‘challenges [participants] to reflect on the gendered expectations of sex in casual and ongoing relationships and ways to actively resist dominant beliefs that promote and condone sexual and other forms of intimate violence’.

187 MacDonald, P & Flood, M 2012, op. cit.

188 Culture of Respect 2017, op. cit.

189 Australian Human Rights Commission, op. cit., p. 15.

190 Campo, S, Poulos, G & Sipple, JW 2005, op. cit., p. 138

191 National Union of Students 2015, op. cit.

- They didn't know how to report the incident.
- They may not define the event as sexual assault.
- They are embarrassed.
- They are reluctant to consider someone they know as a rapist.
- They do not understand the legal definition of sexual assault.¹⁹²

The findings of the above research are consistent with the findings of the Survey of College students and the insights gleaned from the discussion forums and on-on-one interviews.

Of the 19% of surveyed students who reported that they have experienced sexual harassment since commencing at a College, 51% sought support or assistance. Of these, 19% consulted a friend or family member outside of the College; 39% consulted another College resident who is not a staff member; 10% consulted a student in a position of responsibility for the welfare of students (e.g. RA, Dean, Sub-Dean); and 4% consulted a College staff member.

Only 3% of those who experienced sexual harassment made a formal report or formal complaint of the behaviour.¹⁹³ The most common reasons provided for not making a formal report/complaint included:¹⁹⁴

- 'I didn't think it was serious enough' (60%)
- 'I did not think I needed help' (46%)
- 'I thought I could sort it out myself' (34%)
- 'I didn't want other students at my College to judge me' (18%)
- 'I did not want to hurt the offender/s or get them into trouble' (13%)
- 'I did not want anyone to know' (12%)
- 'I felt embarrassed or ashamed' (11%)
- 'I thought it would be too hard to prove' (9%)
- 'I did not think the incident would be kept confidential' (8%)
- 'I thought I would be victimised if I made a complaint' (8%)
- 'I thought it would be too emotionally difficult' (6%)
- 'I was worried I might not be believed' (5%)

Further, of the 4% of students (46 students) who reported they had experienced actual or attempted sexual assault since commencing at College:

- Approximately two-thirds (69%) sought some kind of assistance, mainly from another College resident (who is not a staff member) and friends and family outside of College.
- Only a small number made a formal report or formal complaint (9%).¹⁹⁵ The main barriers to formal reporting included the student not thinking it was serious enough, thinking they could sort it out themselves, feeling embarrassed or ashamed, thinking they did not need help and not wanting anyone to know.

¹⁹² Krebs, C, Lindquist, C & Warner, T 2007, *The Campus Sexual Assault Study*, National Institute of Justice, Washington DC. p. 9.

¹⁹³ Note, too few survey respondents made a formal report on their experience of sexual harassment to include their responses on their satisfaction with their experience of reporting.

¹⁹⁴ Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

¹⁹⁵ Note, too few survey respondents made a formal report on their experience of actual or attempted sexual assault to include their responses on their satisfaction with their experience of reporting.

Highlighting the importance of bystanders in responding to and addressing sexual misconduct, of the students who reported they had witnessed or observed sexual harassment, 49% reported they took some action as a result including:

- ‘Talked to the target of the behaviour’ (35%)
- ‘Talked to the offender’ (11%)
- ‘Reported the incident to their College’ (3%)
- ‘Spoke to a College staff member’ (4%)
- ‘Spoke to a student in a position of responsibility for the welfare of students (e.g. RA, Dean, Sub-Dean, Corridor Monitor)’ (11%)¹⁹⁶

A common theme in discussion groups and interviews was whether students were confident about disclosing and reporting an incident. Students stated:

The [peer support network are] there to support us and to help us if something goes wrong.

I have been to [the staff member in charge of student welfare] before and would go again. She has our best interests at heart.

I think we have a really good system here of who you can go to if something happened. I would feel personally fine about speaking to a [peer support network member].

I feel like we’ve got a good system in place, in that there’s a set network that we can go to with adults. We’ve got that available to us... I think it’s always going to be a difficult situation if you’ve been through that. I can’t imagine. But I feel like we offer as many options as we can.

In contrast to these comments, disclosing or reporting an incident also presented challenges, including a perceived lack of confidentiality, the impact reporting may have on a group, or fear of ostracism or that the matter would not be taken seriously. Further, a sense of shame or a belief that if alcohol was involved the issue would not be addressed properly were also identified as potential barriers to reporting:

If you report something, everyone would know and you would end up a bit of an outsider.

I wouldn’t report an incident because I would worry it would jeopardise my scholarship.

I wouldn’t go to a [peer support network member]... They are only a year or two older than me so it would be really hard to talk to them about an issue that you feel really ashamed of.

It’s hard to report something if it involves someone who is in your group of friends. It could be really hard to then have the same relationship with the group if everyone found out you had complained about someone in the group.

I wouldn’t want the fact that I was drunk to be the issue, not the actual incident.

It’s just easier to stay quiet.

A perceived lack of support was raised as potentially impacting on a student’s confidence in reporting an issue:

[There] should [be] a better system in place for dealing with sexual assault on campus.

I was too scared to report to staff because I felt it would just make my life more difficult and so just put up with it for the rest of the year.

¹⁹⁶ Further, 2% ‘spoke to someone outside of College about what to do’ and 3% ‘did something else’. Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

In any organisation, disclosing or reporting an incident is dependent on whether there is a safe reporting environment. A safe reporting environment is one that meets the following three elements:

- The organisation has zero tolerance to unacceptable behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- Complainants will not be victimised for reporting.
- The matter will be expeditiously investigated and where appropriate, action will be taken.

In Chapter 2, the issue of the peer support network's capacity to respond to serious matters disclosed to them was explored. The Project Team expressed some concern about the level of responsibility placed on members of this network and their limited expertise in dealing with such serious matters as sexual assault. As individuals with no technical experience in dealing with these issues, there is a risk of providing inappropriate support and advice. This in turn can lead to potential re-traumatisation of the person disclosing.

The first disclosure for sexual harassment and sexual assault victims can be the most important. So it is critical that the first response is the right one, from both staff and students. An inadequate or even punitive response (e.g. 'were you drunk?') can often result in silencing and re-traumatising victims. It can also prevent others from coming forward if they do not feel that they will receive a sensitive response. Ongoing and expert training for staff and students in how to respond is critical.

The majority of students the Project Team spoke with did not know of or feel comfortable reporting to the University complaints system or counselling service:

I've never heard of it.

I wouldn't go there. I think they only deal with things like exam stress.

These comments suggest that opportunities exist for more proactive approaches to be taken and a safer reporting environment to be created, both within the Colleges and more broadly across the University of Sydney. This will increase student awareness of reporting mechanisms, and also students' willingness to access them.

Over the last few months...and since this project started we have been discussing and reflecting on things that we probably wouldn't have considered a year or so ago. I think that has been really good for us to bring some issues into the open that we may not have thought about before and to talk about them.

– College Student

Conclusion

In recent years universities and residential colleges, both in Australia and overseas have identified the need to ensure that the college life they offer is positive for all residents. In Australia, the University of Sydney and the five independent residential Colleges have led the way, commencing reviews of their College's culture. This report provides a strong foundation for the necessary changes that must be made for the Colleges to remain strong into the future.

During the course of the Project, the Project Team gained a rich insight into the life of five of the independent Colleges at the University of Sydney. The enthusiastic, open and honest engagement of students, through discussion groups, interviews and the Survey, helped to frame the findings that underpin the recommendations for cultural renewal contained in this report. Far from being uninterested, students were keen to have their voices heard and to contribute to the future direction of their College.

The Project Team heard much about the strengths of College life, the lifelong friendships formed, the rich and diverse extra and co-curricular activities on offer, and the strong academic support. In particular, the Project Team noted the feelings of belonging engendered in students from each College.

The Project Team acknowledges the significant commitment of College Heads, Councils, staff and student leaders to this Project and recognises the strength they must find to implement the Project's recommendations. Their determination to renew their College culture reflects the high regard they hold for their Colleges.

The Project Team has made a range of recommendations which it believes will contribute to a safe, supportive and respectful College culture. These include recommendations underpinned by best practice regarding:

- Student leadership structures.
- O Week events and policies.
- The supply and demand of alcohol.
- Safety and well-being.
- Disclosure and reporting.

It takes courage for an organisation to closely examine its culture and to identify not only those areas that are strong, but those that need to change. But without understanding where the challenges lie, it is not possible to develop a plan for renewal. This Project provides a plan with specific recommendations to strengthen culture. Implementing these recommendations will ensure the ongoing success of the University of Sydney residential Colleges.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first semester at [College] and my attendance here has been a highlight of my life so far, and because of this, I'm in strong support of making changes that could make the experience even better for upcoming generations.

– College Student

Recommendations

The following recommendations build upon the promising strategies currently underway in the Colleges. They are designed to ensure that those strategies are sustainable in the long term.

These recommendations are intended to be common across all Colleges, recognising that a cohesive and collaborative intercollegiate community will have a united response to culture, one that benefits individual Colleges, the University and in particular, the students.

The Project Team recognises that a number of recommendations have already been progressed to varying degrees by individual Colleges. It commends the Colleges for taking proactive action in advance of the report. Where there has already been progress by a College in line with a particular recommendation, this progress is acknowledged in the individual College's report.

It is intended that the Colleges accept the recommendations as either building on their own progress or as providing new and practical levers for reform that will ensure all students have a rich, rewarding and safe experience.

Principle 1: Successful and sustainable cultural renewal depends on strong and courageous leadership

Leaders set the tone of organisations

The College leadership team plays a critical role in shaping standards and driving reform. The University of Sydney also plays a vital part in supporting the Colleges as they strengthen and renew their culture.

Within Colleges there are three tiers of leaders – the College Council, the staff leadership team and the student leaders. Each has important leadership functions – what they say and do has a profound impact on the culture of the College. Led by the Council, all three tiers of the College leadership must visibly commit to the cultural renewal journey. Council, staff and students should work collaboratively to ensure that the culture of their College is one where all students can thrive.

Student leaders can be extremely influential and in this regard they are the Colleges' cultural ambassadors. Given this influence, it is imperative that student leaders are selected through a transparent and rigorous process and that they are supported by staff to develop their leadership skills and capacity. This process provides a principal role for the student body in electing student leaders while also ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place so that elected student leaders demonstrate leadership capability or potential.

Diverse leadership teams, including gender-diverse teams in co-educational/co-residential Colleges, allow for increased access to the best talent.

This results in a diversity of thinking and improved decision-making compared to teams with no or limited diversity. A plethora of research confirms this. For this reason, it is important over time for co-educational/co-residential Colleges to work towards gender-balanced leadership teams.

Collective action is more powerful and sustainable than individual action. Collective action will also demonstrate to the College communities and the University of Sydney the strong commitment the Colleges have to evolving their culture and to addressing behaviours that are inconsistent with respectful and inclusive environments.

Leadership of the reform process

1. The recommendations contained in this report should be owned and championed by the College Council, College Heads, staff and the student leaders.
2. The Council should champion cultural reform. Council should regularly review and discuss cultural renewal at Council meetings and ensure adequate resources are allocated to progress the reform process.
3. To demonstrate their visible commitment to cultural renewal, the College Heads, and the incoming Senior Student/House President/Senior Common Room President, House Executive and Members of the House Committee/Senior Common Room should develop and deliver a clear and strong written statement (signed by all) that articulates the importance of cultural renewal, its benefit to individual students and the College more broadly. This statement, disseminated widely internally and externally, should also:
 - Include strong messages about the College's zero tolerance to hazing and sexual misconduct as well as policies on alcohol misuse, harassment and damage to property.
 - Be reiterated and restated each year with incoming student leadership groups.
 - Be incorporated into orientation for first years and into student leadership training.

4. Recognising that collective action can be more powerful and sustainable than individual action, it is recommended that the Colleges adopt a cross-College approach and continue to work collaboratively to align and amplify efforts to achieve cultural renewal. This would include a standing agenda item on cultural renewal at the Heads of College meeting, including sharing best practice initiatives and problem-solving challenges.
5. To assess progress in relation to cultural renewal, the Colleges should readminister the Survey used in this Project, together with any appropriate modifications, every three years. The results of that Survey should be used to inform additional strategies that may be required to further strengthen and sustain a positive culture.

Student leadership

6. The principal role of student leaders should be to foster and champion a culture of inclusion, respect and safety. The Student Club/Senior Common Room constitutions, charters, policies and role descriptions should reflect this.
7. To ensure that the College promotes and supports strong, inclusive and responsible student leadership, students and staff should, in collaboration, amend the current process for electing student leaders by:
 - Ensuring formal role descriptions for student leadership positions include responsibility as ambassadors of the College values and their obligations to uphold and model these values at all times. The Student Club Constitution/Rules should ensure accountability and consequences for House Committee/Senior Common Room Committee members that breach their role as ambassadors.
 - Developing clear criteria for selection that includes candidates' demonstrated commitment to inclusion, respect and safety.
 - Ensuring candidates for leadership roles have the express support of the College Head in relation to their demonstrated ability to foster and champion a culture of inclusion, respect and safety.
 - Enhancing the transparency, anonymity and confidentiality of the voting process for students, by, for example, utilising an online process with an external provider.
 - Commencing the selection process in early Semester Two to allow proper planning, training, mentoring and leadership development for successful candidates.
 - Ensuring that in co-educational/co-residential Colleges, a gender balance of student leadership teams is achieved including by:
 - » Implementing a 40:40:20 rule for House Executive, House Committee and Senior Common Room, which ensures that there is good gender balance at student leadership levels. The basis of this model is that 40% of leaders are men, 40% are women and 20% are either gender.
 - » Ensuring that the role of Senior Student/House President/Senior Common Room President rotates on an equitable basis between male and female students. The Project Team recommends that the College considers a range of options to achieve this outcome, including (but not limited to): a) rotating the role between male and female students each year; b) over a five-year period applying the 40:40:20 rule; c) structuring the candidate pool in such a way to ensure that neither male nor female can ever be in post for more than two years in succession; d) electing male and female joint Senior Students/House Presidents/Senior Common Room Presidents; and e) electing male and female joint House Presidents, one of whom takes the Senior Student/House President/Senior Common Room President role and the other the Secretary role for the first six months, switching roles for the second half of the year.
 - » Ensuring that there is compulsory training for all elected student leaders, including (but not limited to) ethical leadership and decision-making, respectful relationships, leading diverse and inclusive teams, and bystander interventions.

Consideration should also be given to ongoing mentoring for elected student leaders by a member of College staff.

8. To enhance inclusion and equality within the student community, any practice that reinforces negative elements of student hierarchy should be reviewed with a view to modification.

Staff leadership

9. Councils should continue to support the College Heads and all staff to implement the recommendations and champion cultural reform, including by ensuring staff resources are adequate and by providing staff with access to additional training or skills development as needed.
10. To better reflect the leadership role and status of staff, the collective term for those who lead and manage the College should be changed from 'Administration' to either 'Staff', 'Executive Leadership' or 'Management'.

Principle 2: Inclusive institutions foster and celebrate diversity, respect and non-discrimination

An inclusive College and University environment is one where there is respect for all, where diversity is celebrated as a core feature of the institution, and where fairness and equality underpin decision-making.

Culture is set by the behaviours and attitudes that an institution does not accept or tolerate.

Inclusive practice values the unique contribution that every student can bring to College and campus life and enables:

- The College to attract and retain a diverse student population that reflects the diversity of the University campuses.
- All students to participate fully in the life of the College and the University.

11. Colleges, in consultation with the University of Sydney, should develop targeted strategies to attract and retain a diverse population of students that reflects the University population and broader community.
12. Colleges should foster a culture of respect and fair play in all intercollege social and competitive interactions, by College Heads:
 - Ensuring the intercollege code of conduct for students, including players and spectators of College sport and cultural activities, is grounded in respect for the inherent dignity of all.
 - Eliminating and prohibiting all demeaning or degrading chants, songs and heckling.
 - Enforcing appropriate penalties for any breach of the code, including suspending players from their team or spectators from watching events, who breach the code of conduct.
 - Engaging with their University partners including University of Sydney Union (USU) and Sydney Uni Sport and Fitness (SUSF) to ensure a culture of respect and fair play is embedded in all activities.
 - Exploring broader, non-competitive opportunities for positive interactions between the Colleges.
13. The University of Sydney and Colleges should work together to foster greater connection between Colleges and the broader campus community including by:
 - Developing, in collaboration with the Colleges, and investing in a positive campaign that raises awareness among the University of Sydney campus community of the value of and strong contribution by the Colleges to campus life.

- Creating shared learning communities, including the creation of learning spaces within the Colleges, where College students and non-College students can come together for academic tutorials or other forums.
14. The University of Sydney should make it clear in its code of conduct that disrespectful, demeaning or unethical behaviours from University staff and other students towards College students and staff are strictly prohibited.

Principle 3: A lively, exciting and dynamic culture that also ensures the safety, dignity, health and well-being of students is critical to a thriving and progressive College

Colleges are places where students should feel 'at home' while being supported to engage in their University studies as well as the dynamic intellectual, cultural and social College community. Colleges should foster a lively and exciting culture that enhances students' overall university experience. In building such a culture, the safety, dignity, health and well-being of students must be paramount and risks must be minimised. Attitudes and behaviours that reflect the values of the College should be modelled and practised at all times.

Orientation

15. 'O Week' should be renamed to signal a shift towards induction and welcome, and away from the problematic connotations and expectations of the past.
16. Orientation should be closely overseen by College staff with assistance from Residential Assistants, Resident Advisers, Deans, Sub-Deans and Corridor Representatives and select student leaders.
17. Each College should develop a policy that clearly articulates the purpose of orientation with a focus on induction and inclusion into the College and University community. The policy should be underpinned by respect and safety, inclusion and equity, and ethical leadership. Student leaders involved in the program should be required to sign a code of conduct that reflects the intent of the policy. The orientation policy should include or continue to include:
- The strict prohibition of practices that may be demeaning or place students at physical or emotional risk, including hazing.
 - The inclusion of alcohol-free days (number to be determined by individual Colleges) during the period of orientation.
 - Appropriate training in areas such as first aid, sexual misconduct, responsible consumption of alcohol, and the proper and ethical exercise of authority (student power).
 - The requirement that appropriate events should be subject to a risk assessment. Other events in the academic year should also be subject to a risk assessment.
 - The alignment, as far as practicable, with faculty-based activities and information sessions for new students.

Alcohol

18. The Heads of College should develop a common approach to alcohol harm minimisation. This approach should consider best practice interventions to reduce access/supply and demand of alcohol, and to reduce harm caused by alcohol. The Heads of College may also seek advice from an expert in harm minimisation and drinking patterns of the College age cohort to assist in developing this approach. In particular the Project Team recommends:
- The positions of licensees and bar management should be held by qualified individuals or organisations independent of the Student Club and contracted by College staff.

- Commercial bar rates should be charged for all alcohol at College events and venues and as such the use of Student Club fees for the purchase of alcohol should be prohibited.
- A zero-tolerance approach is visibly practised for alcohol-related behaviour that causes disturbance, damage or harm to any student or property.
- The Student Club should be responsible for any non-accidental property damage, including alcohol-related property damage. This would include the cost of replacement or repair, where the alleged offender cannot be identified.

Once developed, the policy should be widely disseminated among the intercollege community with an explanation of its objectives.

Principle 4: Unacceptable and disrespectful attitudes and behaviours negatively impact on individuals, Colleges and the College community

The vast majority of students feel respected by their peers and have a strong sense of safety at their College. Some students however experience behaviours that make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. For some, particularly female students, experiences such as sexual harassment by other students and for a few, sexual assault, create significant distress and trauma.

All students in College have the right to feel and be safe and respected. Sustaining a culture of respectful relationships is key to a zero-tolerance approach to any unacceptable attitudes and behaviours.

19. Each College's policies on bullying and harassment should explicitly include provisions that prohibit hazing or any other behaviours that compromise students' physical or psychological safety and well-being. The provisions should include a clear definition and scope of hazing behaviours. In line with best practice approaches to the prohibition of hazing:
 - The Colleges should provide comprehensive education about hazing.
 - Victims must be supported, including through appropriate reporting options.
 - Students who engage in hazing behaviours should be appropriately held to account.
20. Each College and the University of Sydney should develop, with guidance from an expert in sexual harassment, sexual assault and respectful relationships, a stand-alone policy that addresses sexual misconduct. The stand-alone policies of the Colleges and the University should be underpinned by best practice principles.
21. Each College's policy should articulate a zero-tolerance approach to sexual misconduct, a commitment to trauma-informed victim/survivor support and, where possible, to holding perpetrators to account. Specifically, the policy should:
 - Expressly prohibit sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment and sexual assault) and make clear the consequences of breaching the policy.
 - Define key terms and concepts illustrated with relevant examples in order to clarify the meanings of and behaviours that constitute sexual harassment, sexual assault and consent.
 - Acknowledge the institution's responsibility to provide a safe and respectful environment for all.
 - Articulate expectations that all members of the College community (including the College Council, staff and students) have a role in creating a safe and respectful environment.
 - Provide clear details on processes for reporting and responding to sexual misconduct, including with specific names and contact details, and how to support someone who has experienced sexual assault.

- Provide clear guidance and a variety of options for survivors/victims to disclose experiencing sexual misconduct; to seek support, counselling and health services; and to identify procedures and timeframes for investigations.
 - Ensure reports are dealt with sensitively and expeditiously and that the parties to a complaint are advised of progress and outcomes while ensuring confidentiality is maintained.
22. All relevant staff, Residential Assistants, Resident Advisers, Deans, Sub-Deans and Corridor Representatives should undergo first responder training by an expert in trauma-informed and survivor-centred approaches, to ensure they have the skills to respond sensitively and appropriately to a sexual assault or sexual harassment disclosure. Evidence-based prevention education and awareness about sexual assault and sexual harassment, and bystander interventions, should be provided to all students and relevant staff. All relevant staff and students should receive this education during their orientation and then as refresher training each year they are at College.
23. In recognition of the psychological and emotional needs of some students, the College should provide and widely advertise referral pathways to specialist psychological support services for students, including for students who have experienced trauma. This support should also be offered to RAs to minimise the risk of vicarious trauma or distress that they may experience through their role.

Appendix A: Survey methodology and interpreting results

An online survey (the Survey) was administered to all students (over the age of 18 years) across the five residential Colleges between 18 May and 9 June 2017. The aim of the Survey was to gather quantitative data on perceptions and experiences of students on a range of areas related to College life, including strengths of College life, and areas they find challenging. It also aimed to understand the prevalence of inappropriate behaviour, sexual harassment and bullying, and any patterns in the experience of particular groups of students, for example women and first-year students.

A total of 1001 students participated in the Survey across the five Colleges. Students were emailed an invitation to take part and received up to two reminders during the course of fieldwork. All students over the age of 18 years were invited to take part (n=1447). Student details were passed onto the Social Research Centre from each College for the purpose of the research. Students who took part were provided with a \$10 e-voucher as an acknowledgement of the time taken to complete the Survey. The Survey took, on average, 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

The Survey attracted a 69% response rate.¹⁹⁷ The Survey provided an alternative avenue for students to engage with the Project and confidentially report on their views and experiences. The findings are reflected throughout this report.

The Survey instrument was developed by the Project Team in collaboration with the College Heads, College staff and the Social Research Centre – a highly regarded social research organisation based in the Research School of Social Sciences at ANU. The themes outlined in the Survey reflect the themes identified in discussions with students, College Heads and College staff. The Survey instrument built upon existing survey instruments including the *National Sexual Harassment survey*,¹⁹⁸ the *Respect Now Always survey*,¹⁹⁹ and the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Personal Safety Survey*.²⁰⁰ However, due to the different population bases and variations in survey methodology, the results cannot be compared to these other surveys.

The Survey responses were weighted to ensure they reflected and were representative of the College student population in each College. Data was weighted by gender, College, undergraduate or postgraduate status, and year at College.

Approval was sought and granted to administer the Survey by the University of Sydney Human Ethics Committee (Ethics Approval Number: 2017/234). The Survey data was analysed by the Social Research Centre on behalf of the Project Team. A list of appropriate referrals and supports were provided to students who participated in the Survey.

Interpreting the results

Some percentages may not add up to the total due to rounding, some categories not being reported (e.g. 'Don't know/Not sure' and 'Prefer not to say'), or being able to choose more than one category.

197 Response rate was defined as the number of interviews divided by the total number of students invited to take part.

198 Australian Human Rights Commission 2012, op. cit.

199 Australian Human Rights Commission 2017, op. cit.

200 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012) 4906.0 – *Personal Safety, Australia, 2012*.

The table below present margins of error associated with various Survey estimates. These take into account both the achieved response rate (69%) and population of residential students across the five Colleges (1447). This table should be use to assist with the interpretation of results. For example, if 50% of students agree with a statement, we can be 95% confident that the true estimate is between 48% and 52%.

Table 1: Error margins

Survey estimate	Associated margin of error, at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$)
	All Colleges
50%	+/- 1.7%
40%/60%	+/- 1.7%
30%/70%	+/- 1.6%
20%/80%	+/- 1.4%
10%/90%	+/- 1.1%
5%/95%	+/- 0.8%

Significance testing was done at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$). Significant differences have been highlighted throughout the report.

Appendix B: Survey questionnaire

University of Sydney Colleges Cultural Renewal Project 2017

Online Questionnaire

INVITATION EMAIL:

You are invited to take part in a survey exploring students' experiences of college life.

The University of Sydney and five of the University of Sydney residential colleges have engaged Elizabeth Broderick & Co. (EB&Co) to conduct a project that will explore the strengths of the residential college experience, areas that could be improved and students' experiences with the broader University community.

The findings from this survey will form a critical component of that work and will be incorporated in a final report due later in the year. Completing the survey is a way to help us develop recommendations that will ensure that the college environment is the best it can be for you and for students who will come after you. Your voice is the most important voice to be heard in this project.

We therefore invite you to complete this short survey about your views and experiences of college life. It will take approximately 10 to 20 minutes to complete, depending on your answers. You will receive a \$10 gift card to reimburse you for your time.

The survey is being conducted by The Social Research Centre on behalf of EB&Co. The survey is voluntary. Your answers will be completely confidential and any responses will be de-identified before used in the final reports. This means that none of the information collected in the survey will be used to identify you and no one will know if you have or haven't participated in the survey. By completing and submitting the survey you are providing your consent to your answers being analysed and used in the report.

Please click here to begin the survey:

<<survey link>>

The survey is being conducted under the University of Sydney's Human Ethics Committee approval (HC Reference Number <<TBC>>). We recommend you read and print the full Participant Information Statement prepared by Elizabeth Broderick & Co. – please click here.

We thank you for taking the time to participate in this important survey.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Broderick

EMAIL FOOTER:

This email was sent by The Social Research Centre, on behalf of Elizabeth Broderick & Co to studentname@email.com
[Click here to unsubscribe from the survey](#)

PROGRAMMER NOTE: FIRST SCREEN ONCE SURVEY IS ACCESSED

INTRODUCTION

Thanks for participating in this important survey. It'll take about 10-20 minutes to complete, depending on your answers.

If you are unable to finish the questionnaire in one sitting, your answers will be saved and you will be able to re-enter and complete it at a time that is convenient.

When you complete the survey, you'll receive a \$10 gift card to reimburse you for your time.

This survey has been approved by the [University of Sydney ethics committee (Ethics Approval Number: 2017/234)]. If you have any queries about the ethical conduct of the survey, please contact +61 2 8627 8176.

The survey may raise sensitive issues and may lead to psychological distress for some individuals. If you experience any distress during or after participating in the survey, you can access support by calling:

- <COLLEGE SPECIFIC CONTACTS>
- Your university's on-campus counselling service;
- LifeLine 13 11 14
- 1800RESPECT (24/7 National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Service)
- Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636

Please click 'Next' to start the survey.

PAUSE SCREEN

Thanks for your time so far. Your answers have been saved. You can use your original survey link to return to the survey and continue from where you left off.

Firstly, a few questions about your college history.

*(ALL)

Q1 How many years have you attended [COLLEGE]?

1. Less than one year
2. 1 year
3. 2 years
4. 3 years
5. 4 years
6. 5+ years
7. Don't know/not sure
8. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q2 What is your level at university?

1. Undergraduate 1st year
2. Undergraduate 2nd year
3. Undergraduate 3rd year
4. Undergraduate 4+ years
5. Postgraduate 1st year
6. Postgraduate 2nd year
7. Postgraduate 3rd year
8. Postgraduate 4+ years
9. Other
10. Don't know/not sure
11. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q3 Before coming to [COLLEGE], where did you previously live?

1. Another University of Sydney residential college
2. Sydney area
3. NSW – rural or regional city/area
4. Interstate – capital city
5. Interstate – rural or regional city/area
6. Overseas
7. Don't know/not sure
8. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q4 Are you a domestic (Australian) or international student?

1. Domestic
2. International
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(IF COLLEGE=Women's College, St Andrew's College or Johns College)

Q4a Are you a residential or non-residential student at [COLLEGE]?

1. Residential
2. Non-residential
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q5 Are you...?

1. Male
2. Female
3. X (Indeterminate, intersex or unspecified)
4. Transgender
5. Other
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q6 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about [COLLEGE]:

*(STATEMENTS)

*RANDOMISE

1. I feel a sense of belonging
2. I get involved in activities and social events organised through my college
3. I feel supported by my peers and staff
4. I feel supported by the student leaders
5. I don't always feel safe at [COLLEGE] (including physical and emotional safety
[IF AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE ASK Q7 BEFORE MOVING ONTO NEXT QUESTION])
6. I don't fit in at [COLLEGE]
[IF AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE ASK Q8 BEFORE MOVING ONTO NEXT QUESTION])
7. Drinking alcohol helps me to socialise and make friends at College
8. There is too much focus on drinking at [COLLEGE]
9. Students leaders have too much power over other students
10. I feel stigmatised by University of Sydney students and staff because I go to college

*(ANSWER FRAME)

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree
- f) Don't know/not sure
- g) Prefer not to say

*(Q6_4 = Agree or strongly agree, I don't always feel safe)

Q7 What makes you feel unsafe (including physical and emotional safety)?

Don't know/not sure
Prefer not to say

*(Q6_5 = Agree or strongly agree, I feel like I don't fit in)

Q8 Why do you feel you don't fit in?

Don't know/not sure
Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q9 Have you ever experienced any of the following since starting at [COLLEGE]? Please select all that apply.

*ROTATE STATEMENTS

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

*RANDOMISE

1. Pressure to drink alcohol when you didn't want to
2. Pressure to take drugs when you didn't want to
3. Bullying or intimidation
4. Pressure to participate in activities that were humiliating or intimidating to you or other students
5. Hazing
6. Being excluded or isolated
7. Malicious or hurtful rumours about you
8. Feeling like you should have sex in order to fit in or be accepted
9. Pressure to hide or deny your sexual orientation and/or gender identity to fit in or be accepted
10. Homophobic slurs directed at you
11. Racist slurs directed at you
12. Sexist remarks directed at you
13. Other behaviours that made you feel uncomfortable (please specify) _____*(FIX)
14. Don't know/not sure
15. Prefer not to say

*(RESPONSE FRAME)

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know/not sure
- d) Prefer not to say

*(IF MORE THAN ONE CHOSEN AT Q9)

Q10 Which was the most recent incident? If you are not sure, please make your best guess.

*(DISPLAY STATEMENTS SELECTED IN Q9)

1. Pressure to drink alcohol when you didn't want to
2. Pressure to take drugs when you didn't want to
3. Bullying or intimidation
4. Pressure to participate in activities that were humiliating or intimidating to you or other students
5. Hazing
6. Being excluded or isolated
7. Malicious or hurtful rumours about you
8. Feeling like you should have sex in order to fit in or be accepted
9. Pressure to hide or deny your sexual orientation and/or gender identity to fit in or be accepted
10. Homophobic slurs directed at you
11. Racist slurs directed at you
12. Sexist remarks directed at you
13. Other behaviours that made you feel uncomfortable (please specify) _____

*(Q9=1-13, Experienced bullying)

Q11 When did the incident happen?

1. During O-week
2. During the academic year (excluding O-week)
3. Other (please specify) _____
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(Q9=1-13, Experienced bullying)

Q11a Where did the incident happen?

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. At the [COLLEGE] residence or grounds
2. At a different University of Sydney college residence or grounds
3. At an off-college event organised by or endorsed by [COLLEGE]
4. At some other event or occasion organised by a different University of Sydney college
5. On the University of Sydney campus
6. At a University of Sydney event
7. On another university campus
8. Somewhere else (please specify) _____
9. Don't know/not sure
10. Prefer not to say

*(Q9=1-13, Experienced bullying)

Q12 Who engaged in the behaviour? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. Fellow student/s from [COLLEGE]
2. Student/s from a different University of Sydney college
3. University student/s who were NOT University of Sydney college residents
4. Other (please specify) _____
5. Don't know/not sure
6. Prefer not to say

*(Q12=1, Fellow student/s from college)

Q12a What was the person or people's relationship to you?

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. In your same year or lower year at college
2. In a more senior year at college
3. An O-Week leader
4. Another student leader
5. An RA, Dean, Sub-Dean or Corridor Monitor [SPECIFIC EXAMPLE INSERTED FOR EACH COLLEGE]
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q9=1-13, Experienced bullying)

Q13 Was the person/people engaged in the behaviour...?

1. Male(s) only
2. Female(s) only
3. Both male(s) and female(s)
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(Q9=1-13, Experienced bullying)

Q13a Did you seek support or assistance from any of the following in relation to the incident? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. Friends or family (outside of [COLLEGE])
2. Another [COLLEGE] resident (who is not a staff member)
3. A college staff member
4. A student in a position of responsibility for the welfare of students (eg. [PROGRAMMER NOTE: INSERT TEXT TO BE PROVIDED FOR EACH COLLEGE])
5. Student support services at university

6. Some other university employee
7. Student union
8. Police
9. Other (please specify) _____
10. Did not seek support or assistance *(EXCLUSIVE)
11. Don't know/not sure
12. Prefer not to say

*(Q9=1-13, Experienced bullying)

Q14 Did you formally report or make a formal complaint about the incident to anyone?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(Q14=1, Yes made formal report or complaint)

Q15 Who did you report it to?

1. A college staff member
2. A student in a position of responsibility for the welfare of students (eg. [PROGRAMMER NOTE: INSERT TEXT TO BE PROVIDED FOR EACH COLLEGE])
3. University complaints service
4. Police
5. Other (please specify) _____
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q14=1, Yes, made formal report or complaint)

*ASK FOR ALL OPTIONS CHOSEN IN Q15

Q16 How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the formal reporting or complaint process?

*DISPLAY EACH STATEMENT CHOSEN IN Q15 IN TURN

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q14=2, No, did not make formal report or complaint)

Q17 There are many different reasons why people decide not to formally report or make a complaint about an incident. Which, if any, of these were reasons you decided not to formally report or make a complaint? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

*RANDOMISE

1. I did not know who I could make a formal report or complaint to
2. I did not know where I had to go/what I had to do to make a formal report or complaint
3. I felt embarrassed or ashamed
4. I thought it would be too emotionally difficult
5. I did not think the incident would be kept confidential
6. I did not think I needed help
7. I did not think it was serious enough
8. I thought I could sort it out myself
9. I was worried I might not be believed
10. I did not want to hurt the offender/s or get them into trouble
11. I thought it would be too hard to prove
12. I was too scared or frightened
13. I did not want anyone to know
14. I thought it could incriminate me / did not want to get into trouble
15. I didn't want other students in [COLLEGE] to judge me
16. I thought I would be victimised if I made a complaint
17. Other reasons (please specify) _____*(FIX)
18. Don't know/not sure
19. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q18 The next questions are about any sexual harassment or sexual assault you may have experienced or witnessed.

If you feel any of these questions may cause you distress and you would prefer not to answer them, you can select 'Prefer not to say' to skip to the next question.

Firstly, please read this definition of sexual harassment.

"Sexual harassment is an unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which, in the circumstances, a reasonable person, aware of those circumstances, would anticipate the possibility that the person would feel offended, humiliated or intimidated."

Have you experienced sexual harassment since starting at [COLLEGE]?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

*(If Q18=2, 3, or 4, No, DK/Prefer not to say, insert “, if any, “)

Q19 Which (, if any,)of the following have you experienced in a way that was unwelcome since starting at [COLLEGE]? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

*RANDOMISE

1. Unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing
2. Inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated
3. Sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body
4. Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended
5. Sexually explicit pictures, posters or gifts that made you feel offended
6. Repeated or inappropriate invitations to go out on dates
7. Intrusive questions about your private life or physical appearance that made you feel offended
8. Sexually explicit emails or SMS messages
9. Inappropriate physical contact
10. Repeated or inappropriate advances on email, social networking websites or internet chat rooms
11. Inappropriate commentary, images or film of you distributed on some form of social media without your consent
12. Requests or pressure for sex, or other sexual acts
13. Any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature (please specify) _____*(FIX)
14. Don't know/not sure
15. Prefer not to say

*(RESPONSE FRAME)

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know/not sure
- d) Prefer not to say

*(IF MORE THAN ONE CHOSEN IN Q19)

Q20 Which was the most recent incident? If you are not sure, please make your best guess.

*(STATEMENTS)

*(DISPLAY STATEMENTS SELECTED IN Q19)

1. Unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing
2. Inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated
3. Sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body
4. Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended
5. Sexually explicit pictures, posters or gifts that made you feel offended
6. Repeated or inappropriate invitations to go out on dates
7. Intrusive questions about your private life or physical appearance that made you feel offended
8. Sexually explicit emails or SMS messages
9. Inappropriate physical contact

10. Repeated or inappropriate advances on email, social networking websites or internet chat rooms
11. Inappropriate commentary, images or film of you distributed on some form of social media without your consent
12. Requests or pressure for sex, or other sexual acts
13. Any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature (please specify) _____

*(IF ANY CHOSEN ON Q19)

Q21 When did the incident happen?

1. During O-week
2. During the academic year (excluding O-week)
3. Other (please specify) _____
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(IF ANY CHOSEN ON Q19)

*(DO NOT ASK IF Q19= CODE 8, 10 OR 11 ONLY OR IF Q20=CODE 8, 10 OR 11 – ONLINE BEHAVIOURS)

Q21a Where did the incident happen?

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. At the [COLLEGE] residence or grounds
2. At a different University of Sydney college residence or grounds
3. At an off-college event organised by or endorsed by [COLLEGE]
4. At some other event or occasion organised by a different University of Sydney college
5. On the University of Sydney campus
6. At a University of Sydney event
7. On another university campus
8. Somewhere else (please specify) _____
9. Don't know/not sure
10. Prefer not to say

*(IF ANY CHOSEN ON Q19)

Q22 Who engaged in the unwelcome behaviour? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. Fellow student/s in your same year from [COLLEGE]
2. Fellow student/s in a year more senior to you at [COLLEGE]
3. Student/s from a different University of Sydney college
4. University student/s who were NOT University of Sydney college residents
5. Other (please specify) _____
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q22=1, Fellow student/s from college)

Q22a What was the person or people's relationship to you?

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. In your same year or lower year at college
2. In a more senior year at college
3. An O-Week leader
4. Another student leader
5. An RA, Dean, Sub-Dean or Corridor Monitor [SPECIFIC EXAMPLE INSERTED FOR EACH COLLEGE]
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(IF ANY CHOSEN ON Q19)

Q23 Was the person/people engaged in the unwelcome behaviour...?

1. Male(s) only
2. Female(s) only
3. Both male(s) and female(s)
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(IF ANY CHOSEN ON Q19)

Q24 Did you seek support or assistance from any of the following in relation to the incident? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. Friends or family
2. Another [COLLEGE] resident (who is not a staff member)
3. A college staff member
4. A student in a position of responsibility for the welfare of students (eg. [PROGRAMMER NOTE: INSERT TEXT TO BE PROVIDED FOR EACH COLLEGE])
5. Student support services at university
6. Some other university employee
7. Another external support e.g. 1800 RESPECT, Lifeline
8. Police
9. Other (please specify) _____
10. Did not seek support or assistance *(EXCLUSIVE)
11. Don't know/not sure
12. Prefer not to say

*(IF ANY CHOSEN ON Q19)

Q25 Did you formally report or make a formal complaint about the incident to anyone?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(Q25=1, Yes, made formal report or complaint)

Q26 Who did you report it to?

1. A college staff member
2. A student in a position of responsibility for the welfare of students (eg. [PROGRAMMER NOTE: INSERT TEXT TO BE PROVIDED FOR EACH COLLEGE])
3. University complaints service
4. Police
5. Other (please specify) _____
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q25=1, Yes, made formal report or complaint)

*ASK FOR ALL OPTIONS CHOSEN IN Q26

Q27 How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the formal reporting or complaint process?

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q25=2, No, did not formally report or make a complaint)

Q28 There are many different reasons why people decide not to formally report or make a complaint about an incident. Which, if any, of these were reasons you decided not to formally report or make a complaint? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

*RANDOMISE

1. I did not know who I could make a formal report or complaint to
2. I did not know where I had to go/what I had to do to make a formal report or complaint
3. I felt embarrassed or ashamed
4. I thought it would be too emotionally difficult
5. I did not think the incident would be kept confidential
6. I did not think I needed help

7. I did not think it was serious enough
8. I thought I could sort it out myself
9. I was worried I might not be believed
10. I did not want to hurt the offender/s or get them into trouble
11. I thought it would be too hard to prove
12. I was too scared or frightened
13. I did not want anyone to know
14. I thought it could incriminate me / did not want to get into trouble
15. I didn't want other students in [COLLEGE] to judge me
16. I thought I would be victimised if I made a complaint
17. Other reasons (please specify) _____*(FIX)
18. Don't know/not sure
19. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q29 Please read this definition of sexual assault.

“Sexual assault occurs when a person is forced, coerced, tricked or intimidated into sexual acts against their will or without their consent, including when they have withdrawn their consent. It also includes any attempts to force, coerce, trick or intimidate a person into sexual acts against their will or without their consent. Sexual assault can also occur if you are incapacitated by alcohol or drugs and therefore unable to consent. “

Have you experienced sexual assault since starting at [COLLEGE]?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(Q29=1, EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ASSAULT)

Q30 When did the incident happen?

1. During O-week
2. During the academic year (excluding O-week)
3. Other (please specify) _____
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(Q29=1, EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ASSAULT)

Q30a Where did the incident happen? If there has been more than one incident, please answer for the most recent incident.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. At the [COLLEGE] residence or grounds
2. At a different University of Sydney college residence or grounds
3. At an off-college event organised by or endorsed by [COLLEGE]

4. At some other event or occasion organised by a different University of Sydney college
5. On the University of Sydney campus
6. At a University of Sydney event
7. On another university campus
8. Somewhere else (please specify) _____
9. Don't know/not sure
10. Prefer not to say

*(Q29=1, EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ASSAULT)

Q31 Who engaged in the behaviour? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. Fellow student/s in the same year at [COLLEGE]
2. Fellow student/s in a year more senior to you at [COLLEGE]
3. Student/s from a different University of Sydney college
4. University student/s who were NOT University of Sydney college residents
5. Other (please specify) _____
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q31=1, Fellow student/s from college)

Q31a What was the person or people's relationship to you?

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. In your same year or lower year at college
2. In a more senior year at college
3. An O-Week leader
4. Another student leader
5. An RA, Dean, Sub-Dean or Corridor Monitor [SPECIFIC EXAMPLE INSERTED FOR EACH COLLEGE]
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q29=1, EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ASSAULT)

Q32 Was the person/people engaged in the behaviour...?

1. Male(s) only
2. Female(s) only
3. Both male(s) and female(s)
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(Q29=1, EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ASSAULT)

Q33 Did you seek support or assistance from any of the following in relation to the incident? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. Friends or family outside of [COLLEGE]
2. Another college resident (who is not a staff member)
3. A college staff member
4. A student in a position of responsibility for the welfare of students (eg. [PROGRAMMER NOTE: INSERT TEXT TO BE PROVIDED FOR EACH COLLEGE])
5. Student support services at university
6. Some other university employee
7. Another external support e.g. 1800 RESPECT, Lifeline
8. Police
9. Other (please specify) _____
10. Did not seek support or assistance *(EXCLUSIVE)
11. Don't know/not sure
12. Prefer not to say

*(Q29=1, EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ASSAULT)

Q34 Did you formally report or make a formal complaint about the incident to anyone?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(Q34=1, Yes, made formal report or complaint)

Q35 Who did you report it to?

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. A college staff member
2. A student in a position of responsibility for the welfare of students (eg. [PROGRAMMER NOTE: INSERT TEXT TO BE PROVIDED FOR EACH COLLEGE])
3. University complaints service
4. Police
5. Other (please specify) _____
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q34=1, Yes, made formal report or complaint)

*ASK FOR ALL OPTIONS CHOSEN IN Q35

Q36 How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the formal reporting or complaint process?

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Don't know/not sure
7. Prefer not to say

*(Q34=2, No, did not formally report or make a complaint)

Q37 There are many different reasons why people decide not to formally report or make a complaint about an incident. Which, if any, of these were reasons you decided not to formally report or make a complaint? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

*RANDOMISE

1. I did not know who I could make a formal report or complaint to
2. I did not know where I had to go/what I had to do to make a formal report or complaint
3. I felt embarrassed or ashamed
4. I thought it would be too emotionally difficult
5. I did not think the incident would be kept confidential
6. I did not think I needed help
7. I did not think it was serious enough
8. I thought I could sort it out myself
9. I was worried I might not be believed
10. I did not want to hurt the offender/s or get them into trouble
11. I thought it would be too hard to prove
12. I was too scared or frightened
13. I did not want anyone to know
14. I thought it could incriminate me / did not want to get into trouble
15. I didn't want other students in [COLLEGE] to judge me
16. I thought I would be victimised if I made a complaint
17. Other reasons (please specify) _____*(FIX)
18. None of the above
19. Don't know/not sure
20. Prefer not to say

*(PROGRAMMER NOTE: DISPLAY BELOW TEXT ON SEPARATE SCREEN BEFORE Q38 BEGINS)

The next questions are about behaviour you might have witnessed or observed happening to another college resident.

Q38 Have you ever witnessed or observed any of the following happening to another college resident since starting at [COLLEGE]? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

*RANDOMISE STATEMENTS

*PROGRAMMER NOTE: PROGRAM AS CAROUSEL

*(DISPLAY IN SAME ORDER AS APPEARED IN Q9)

1. Pressure to drink alcohol when they didn't want to
2. Pressure to take drugs when they didn't want to
3. Bullying or intimidation of them
4. Pressure to participate in activities that were humiliating or intimidating to them or other students
5. Hazing
6. Residents being excluded or isolated
7. Malicious or hurtful rumours about them
8. Pressure to hide or deny their sexual orientation and/or gender identity to fit in or be accepted
9. Homophobic slurs directed at them
10. Racist slurs directed at them
11. Sexist remarks directed at them
12. Other behaviours that could have felt uncomfortable (please specify) _____*(FIX)
13. Don't know/not sure
14. Prefer not to say

*(RESPONSE FRAME)

*(ALLOW MULTIPLES)

- a) Yes, happened to a resident from [COLLEGE]
- b) Yes, happened to a resident from another college
- c) Happened to both a resident from [COLLEGE] and another college
- d) No
- e) Don't know/not sure
- f) Prefer not to say

*(IF MORE THAN ONE CHOSEN AT Q38)

Q39 Which was the most recent incident? If you are not sure, please make your best guess.

*(DISPLAY STATEMENTS SELECTED IN Q38)

*(ALLOW MULTIPLES)

1. Pressure to drink alcohol when they didn't want to
2. Pressure to take drugs when they didn't want to
3. Bullying or intimidation of them
4. Pressure to participate in activities that were humiliating or intimidating to them or other students
5. Hazing
6. Being excluded or isolated
7. Malicious or hurtful rumours about them

8. Pressure to hide or deny their sexual orientation and/or gender identity to fit in or be accepted
9. Homophobic slurs directed at them
10. Racist slurs directed at them
11. Sexist remarks directed at them
12. Other behaviours that could have felt uncomfortable (please specify) _____*(FIX)

*(IF Q39 = MOST RECENT INCIDENT CHOSEN HAD MULTIPLE RESPONSE, IE. HAPPENED TO BOTH THIS AND ANOTHER COLLEGE RESIDENT)

Q40 Did the most recent incident happen to ...?

1. A resident from [COLLEGE]
2. A resident from another college
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(Q38=1-13 Witnessed bullying)

Q41 When did you witness or observe the incident?

1. During O-week
2. During the academic year (excluding O-week)
3. Other (please specify) _____
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(Q38=1-13 Witnessed bullying)

Q41a Where did you witness or observe the incident?

*(ALLOW MULTIPLES)

1. At the [COLLEGE] residence or grounds
2. At a different University of Sydney college residence or grounds
3. At an off-college event organised by or endorsed by [COLLEGE]
4. At some other event or occasion organised by a different University of Sydney college
5. On the University of Sydney campus
6. At a University of Sydney event
7. On another university campus
8. Somewhere else (please specify) _____
9. Don't know/not sure
10. Prefer not to say

*(Q38=1-13 Witnessed bullying)

Q42 Who engaged in the behaviour you witnessed? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. Fellow student/s from [COLLEGE]
2. Student/s from a different University of Sydney college
3. University student/s who were NOT University of Sydney college residents
4. Other (please specify) _____
5. Don't know/not sure
6. Prefer not to say

*(Q38=1-13 Witnessed bullying)

Q43 Was the person/people engaged in the behaviour you witnessed...?

1. Male(s) only
2. Female(s) only
3. Both male(s) and female(s)
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(Q38=1-13 Witnessed bullying)

Q44 Did you take any of the following actions when you became aware of the incident? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. I talked to the target of the behaviour
2. I talked to the offender
3. I reported the incident to [COLLEGE]
4. I spoke to a college staff member
5. I spoke to a student in a position of responsibility (e.g. [PROGRAMMER NOTE: INSERT TEXT TO BE PROVIDED FOR EACH COLLEGE])
6. I spoke to someone outside [COLLEGE] about what to do
7. I called an external support service (e.g. 1800 RESPECT or Lifeline)
8. I called the police
9. I called university campus security
10. I did something else (please specify) _____
11. I didn't do anything *(EXCLUSIVE)
12. Don't know/not sure
13. Prefer not to say

Q45 Have you ever witnessed or observed any of the following happening to another college resident since starting at [COLLEGE]? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

*ROTATE STATEMENTS

* DISPLAY IN SAME ORDER AS APPEARED IN Q19

1. Unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing
2. Inappropriate staring or leering that would be intimidating
3. Sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body
4. Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that could be offensive
5. Sexually explicit pictures, posters or gifts that could be offensive
6. Repeated or inappropriate invitations to go out on dates
7. Intrusive questions about someone's private life or physical appearance that could be offensive
8. Sexually explicit emails or SMS messages
9. Inappropriate physical contact
10. Repeated or inappropriate advances on email, social networking websites or internet chat rooms
11. Inappropriate commentary, images or film of you distributed on some form of social media without your consent
12. Requests or pressure for sex, or other sexual acts
13. Actual or attempted sexual assault or rape *(FIX)
14. Any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature (please specify) _____*(FIX)
15. Don't know/not sure
16. Prefer not to say

*(RESPONSE FRAME)

*(ALLOW MULTIPLES)

- a) Yes, happened to a resident from [COLLEGE]
- b) Yes, happened to a resident from another college
- c) No
- d) Don't know/not sure
- e) Prefer not to say

*(IF MORE THAN ONE CHOSEN IN Q45)

Q46 Which was the most recent incident? If you are not sure, please make your best guess.

*(DISPLAY STATEMENTS FROM Q45)

*(IF Q46= MOST RECENT INCIDENT CHOSEN HAD MULTIPLE RESPONSE, IE. HAPPENED TO BOTH THIS AND ANOTHER COLLEGE RESIDENT)

Q47 Did the most recent incident occur to ...?

1. A resident from [COLLEGE]
2. A resident from another college
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(Q45=1-14 Witnessed sexual harassment/assault)

Q48 When did you witness or observe the incident?

1. During O-week
2. During the academic year (excluding O-week)
3. Other (please specify) _____
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(Q45=1-14 Witnessed sexual harassment/assault)

Q48a Where did you witness or observe the incident?

*ALLOW MULTIPLES)

1. At the [COLLEGE] residence or grounds
2. At a different University of Sydney college residence or grounds
3. At an off-college event organised by or endorsed by [COLLEGE]
4. At some other event or occasion organised by a different University of Sydney college
5. On the University of Sydney campus
6. At a University of Sydney event
7. On another university campus
8. Somewhere else (please specify) _____
9. Don't know/not sure
10. Prefer not to say

*(Q45=1-14 Witnessed sexual harassment/assault)

Q49 Who engaged in the unwelcome behaviour you witnessed? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. Fellow student/s from [COLLEGE]
2. Student/s from a different University of Sydney college
3. University student/s who were NOT University of Sydney college residents
4. Other (please specify) _____
5. Don't know/not sure
6. Prefer not to say

*(Q45=1-14 Witnessed sexual harassment/assault)

Q50 Was the person/people engaged in the unwelcome behaviour you witnessed...?

1. Male(s) only
2. Female(s) only
3. Both male(s) and female(s)
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(Q46=1-14 Witnessed sexual harassment/assault)

Q51 Did you take any of the following actions when you became aware of the incident? Please select all that apply.

*ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. I talked to the victim
2. I talked to the offender
3. I reported the incident to [COLLEGE]
4. I spoke to a college staff member
5. I spoke to a student in a position of responsibility (e.g. [PROGRAMMER NOTE:INSERT TEXT TO BE PROVIDED FOR EACH COLLEGE])
6. I spoke to someone outside [COLLEGE] about what to do
7. I called an external support service (e.g. 1800 RESPECT or Lifeline)
8. I called the police
9. I called university campus security
10. I did something else (please specify) _____
11. I didn't do anything *(EXCLUSIVE)
12. Don't know/not sure
13. Prefer not to say

Now just a few more questions about you.

*(ALL)

Q52 How old are you?

ALLOW TWO DIGIT NUMBER

* Prefer not to say

*(Q52 = Prefer not to say age)

Q53 Ok, but would you please indicate which of the following age groups you belong to?

1. 18-21
2. 22-25
3. 26 and over
4. Don't know/not sure
5. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q54 Which of the following best describes the way you think of your sexual orientation?

1. Straight/heterosexual
2. Gay/lesbian/homosexual
3. Bisexual
4. Asexual
5. Undecided/not sure/questioning
6. Other
7. Don't know/not sure
8. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q55 In which country were you born?

1. Australia
2. China
3. New Zealand
4. India
5. England
6. Malaysia
7. Republic of South Korea
8. Vietnam
9. Other (please specify) _____
10. Don't know/not sure
11. Prefer not to say

*(Q55=2-9, Not born in Australia)

Q56 In what year did you first move to Australia to live?

1. (Specify year) _____
2. Don't know/not sure
3. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q57 Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

1. Aboriginal
2. Torres Strait Islander
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
4. Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander
5. Don't know/not sure
6. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q58 Do you have a disability that has lasted or is likely to last 6 months or more that has an impact on your day-to-day life? A disability may include a mental, physical or chronic health issue.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/not sure
4. Prefer not to say

*(ALL)

Q59 Is there anything else you would like to tell us that hasn't been covered in this survey?

No other comments

FINAL SCREEN

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

This research has been conducted by The Social Research Centre in compliance with the Privacy Act and the information you provided will be used only for research purposes. None of the information collected in the survey can be used to identify you. Your answers will remain strictly confidential and will be combined with the information from hundreds of other students.

If you would like further information about the survey, please contact <CONTACT NUMBER FOR EB&CO>.

Please note that your survey responses about any sexual harassment or assault you may have experienced or witnessed do not constitute a formal report of that sexual harassment or assault.

If you would like advice about making a formal complaint or the survey brings up issues for you, there are people you can talk to. You can contact one of the following services.

- <INSERT COLLEGE SPECIFIC CONTACTS>
- Your university's on-campus counselling service
- 1800RESPECT (24/7 National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Service)
- LifeLine 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636
- Police 9550 8199

Thank you again for your time and support of this important survey.

