

A Safe Place to Call Home

At its most simplistic, safety sits only just behind air, water, food and sleep as one of humanities most basic needs, and after the events of the last twelve months, health, wellbeing and safety have certainly taken on a whole new meaning.

It would thus come as no surprise that safety and security are important priorities for students when attending university and securing accommodation, also impacting heavily on students' learning and overall experience (Global Student Living 2019; Universities Australia, 2009). As the 2009 Universities Australia position paper on *Enhancing the Student Experience and Student Safety* (p.11) asserts, "...an absolute foundation for the student experience is the provision of a safe environment for study and learning and living."

At Deakin Res we have always prided ourselves on delivering an outstanding student accommodation experience within a safe, secure, and convenient environment. Vincent Wilson, Chief Executive Officer of Deakin Residential Services notes,

"our experience shows that many students make the decision to live within our student accommodation because of its well-deserved reputation as a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment."

Our 24-7 reception, specialist support staff and COVID-safe environment are all important safety nets for students who are living out of home for the first time and their parents who are wanting to ensure that they have the best experience possible."

94%

of residents felt that Deakin Res had proactively managed COVID.

95%

of residents felt that student accommodation at Deakin was a safe place to live.

Deakin Res takes our approach to student safety very seriously, and in August each year, Deakin Res conducts its annual Student Experience Survey to seek the feedback and satisfaction levels of current residents. Feedback from the survey (which had a 52% response rate in 2020) was overwhelmingly positive, particularly in relation to our residents' sense of safety and security on campus, and Deakin Res' approach to COVID safety on campus.

Of course, safety extends beyond just the physical (Quiros, Kay & Montijo 2012). Emotional and psychological safety, in terms of feeling connected, accepted and confident that others will not shame, reject or punish us, is equally as important and it was pleasing to note that 97% of residents further indicated that they felt 'safe to be themselves' whilst living at Deakin Res.

"The main reason I chose to live at Deakin Res is the safe and welcoming environment."

- Current Burwood Campus resident.

3 Ways Deakin Res Provides a Safe Place to Call Home

1.



24-7 customer service and security:

Residents have direct access to staff to support them at all hours of the day and night.

2.



Proactive wellbeing support: We ensure residents remain connected, are kept informed and are provided with opportunities to contribute to their community.

3.



Provision of a COVID safe environment: Proven COVIDsafe management plan which influences all aspects of our operations to ensure resident health and safety.

Hailey Silva, Deakin Resident, Burwood Campus



Hailey Silva first moved to Deakin Res in 2019 from the small country town of Myrree in Victoria's north-east, having completed her high school studies at Galen Catholic College in nearby Wangaratta. Studying Environmental Science (Wildlife and Conservation Biology), Hailey elected to study at Deakin because of the high ranking of her course of study. Choosing to apply to live on campus, she notes that she was keen to find "...a community where I could connect with people with similar interests." Safety and security was also a top priority.

"I was also looking for somewhere that felt safe as a young woman moving out of home for the first time, and res provided that." Feeling a sense of belonging and comfort in her new home was also paramount, and Hailey notes that

"...the opportunities to meet new people and feel included in a community have made my time on res really positive and helped me to grow as a person."

Hailey has enjoyed her experiences on residence so much so that her brother, Henry, has now followed in her footsteps, with both living on residence in 2021 at our Burwood campus. You can read more about Hailey and Henry's journey to res at <https://blogs.deakin.edu.au/deakinres>.



If you or your students are interested to know more about the opportunities available to live on campus at Deakin in 2021, 2022 or beyond, please contact www.deakin.edu.au/live

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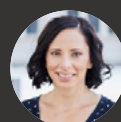
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Laura is responsible for the design, development, coordination and continual enhancement of the student experience at Deakin Res, throughout the journey from high school, pre-arrival, orientation and transition and on-campus experience through to alumni engagement. Laura is widely regarded as an industry expert in the theory, planning, and delivery of exceptional student experiences, having honed her skills over the course of a career spanning two decades and multiple higher education institutions.