

# The Impact of Student Accommodation

It is now widely accepted that a considerable amount of student learning and development takes place outside traditional academic contexts like the lecture theatre, tutorial room or laboratory (Terenzini, Rendon, Upcraft, Miller, Allison, Gregg & Jalomo 1994).

Indeed, the skills which our current cohort of undergraduate students need to prepare them for their future employment and emergence as 'global citizens' are now seen as being provided or achieved through a number of means – it's both the knowledge they obtain through their course work or as part of the completion of their undergraduate degree, and, perhaps more importantly, it's the essential skills they develop alongside, be it through internships, work experience, community and volunteer work, everyday peer to peer interaction and where relevant, their experiences living on-campus during their studies (Krause 2005; Steffes 2004).

Living within student accommodation can be of great benefit as students' learning is not confined simply to coursework or tutorials and lectures, but rather extends beyond the classroom to involve a wide range of experiences, from moving away from home for the first time, to sharing a living space, to participating in the wide range of new and exciting activities and programs on offer as part of university life. When asked in DRS' Annual Student Experience Survey as to the impact of living on campus, residents highlighted the following (August 2020, 52% response rate):

Living on residence has:

97%

Helped me to live independently.

91%

Had a positive impact on learning experience.

90%

Helped me to understand people of other cultures and backgrounds.

89%

Had a positive impact on personal development.

88%

Helped me to practice developing healthy relationships.

Perhaps the best indicators of the long-lasting impact of living on campus are Deakin's former residents, now in fulfilling careers across a variety of sectors. Greta Atkins lived within the Deakin Burwood campus residences. Originally from Hobart, Greta completed a Bachelor of Nursing and is now a Registered Nurse. She highlights that her time living on campus was invaluable in helping her to

"... learn to socialise and live with all different types of people, helping her to ultimately become a better nurse."

Braden Tuohey also lived at our Burwood residences, studying Sport Development. A Cricket Officer at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) Braden highlights that his two years living on campus was of great benefit to his personal and professional growth.

"I think the ability to engage with new people who come from all different backgrounds is something that living on Res helped me develop, and it's gone a long way towards contributing to my career post-uni. Living on campus definitely helped me to get out of my comfort zone and allowed me to develop my social skills."

Fellow Burwood campus resident, Alice Bleathman studied a Bachelor of Nutritional Science and Master of Dietetics and is now an accredited practicing Dietitian and Nutritionist. Like Greta and Braden, she notes that her time living on campus was beneficial for both personal and professional reasons.

"Professionally, I not only was able to allocate more time to networking etc. due to the fact of being so close to Uni, but I also developed so many transferable skills that I now use every day in my business. Personally, I made so many amazing friends while living on Res."

As Yonna Cowan, General Manager, Melbourne Burwood Campus highlights,

"Living on campus offers a supported, yet independent, living environment that fosters growth for the individual, and enriches their personal connections. The experiences provided teach transferable skills, enhance knowledge and help build resilience for students to use in the next stage of their professional and personal lives."

## References

Krause, K.L., (2005) Engaged, Inert or Otherwise Occupied?: Deconstructing the 21st Century Undergraduate Student, Keynote Speech Presented at the James Cook University Symposium, Sharing Scholarship in Learning and Teaching: Engaging Students, James Cook University, Townsville/Cairns, Queensland, 21-22 September 2005.

Steffes, J.S., (2004) Creating Powerful Learning Environments Beyond the Classroom, Change, 36 (3): 46 - 50 Terenzini, P.T., Rendon, L.I., Upcraft, M.L., Millar, S.B., Allison, K.W., Gregg, P.L., and Jalomo, R., (1994) The Transition to College: Diverse Students, Diverse Stories, Research in Higher Education, 35 (1): 57 - 73

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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.



**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](http://www.deakin.edu.au/live)**