

Report to St Andrew's College on Cultural Renewal

November 2017

Contents

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project purpose

This report forms part of The Cultural Renewal Project (the 'Project') conducted by Elizabeth Broderick & Co. to examine the values, systems, behaviours and processes in five residential colleges ('Colleges') at the University of Sydney (the 'University'), including St Andrew's College. Put simply, the purpose of the Project was to understand elements of the existing culture of each College. To do this, the Project Team sought to understand the great strengths of College life – the sense of community; how academic excellence inspires students; pastoral care; extracurricular activities; the building of deep and lasting friendships; and networking opportunities and connection to College alumni.

The Project Team also sought to identify those areas of the culture in need of 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 instances of sexual harassment and sexual assault?

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

This Project has been undertaken at the request of five Colleges, including St Andrew's College and its Council, and the University of Sydney. Both the College and the University recognise the importance of institutional cultural reform as a catalyst for the development of skills, knowledge and values necessary for students to thrive in a rapidly changing world. St Andrew's 'Holding the Mirror' initiative is a commendable and ongoing example of this recognition.

In this report, the Project Team sets out its understanding of the prevailing cultural life of St Andrew's, acknowledging the recent changes. It uses this understanding to formulate recommendations that build on the reforms already underway at St Andrew's. Building on existing reforms in a more systematic way will ensure that participation in this Project benefits not only current students but those who will reside at St Andrew's in the future.

The Project Team acknowledges the support of the Principal, staff and student leaders, who were critical to the success of the Project. This leadership group ensured strong levels of engagement in the cultural renewal process.

The Project has been conducted 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, St Andrew's, along with the four other independent Colleges and the University of Sydney are leaders in this important area. It is hoped that this report and associated recommendations will serve as a blueprint for other colleges, in Australia and internationally, to strengthen and evolve their culture.

1.2 Project approach

1.2.1 General

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 and one-on-one interviews with students and staff, a review of academic literature, and a review of St Andrew's own policies and statistics, as well as advice from staff and student leaders all contributed to building a substantial evidence base for this Project.

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. 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. See Appendix A for further details on the methodology of the Survey.¹ Students who participated in the Survey and in discussion forums were provided with contact details for relevant referral and support services.

This report, along with the individual reports delivered to each of the other four participating Colleges, is complemented by the report 'Cultural Renewal at University of Sydney Residential Colleges' that provides further detail on the evidence base for the Project's findings and best practice approaches to addressing the issues identified in this report.

1.2.2 Specific to St Andrew's College

In summary:

- Seven discussion groups and six one-on-one interviews were held with St Andrew's students, with 103 students participating over 2016 and 2017 across First, Second and Third years including targeted discussion groups with student leaders and the Dean Team. The Project Team also spoke with members of the Intercollege LGBTQ+ Support Group, which is convened by St Andrew's students. Additionally, the Project Team conducted one-on-one interviews with 12 alumni.
- A total of 204 St Andrew's students participated in the Survey, with the Survey attracting a 64% response rate (on par with the 69% response rate across the five residential Colleges).

The Survey results from St Andrew's College are compared to the combined results across the five residential Colleges participating in the Project. Statistically significant differences between the reported experiences of students surveyed at St Andrew's College and the experience of students across the five residential Colleges are highlighted in this report.

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

¹ It is important to note that the Survey is not comparable with results reported in the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Change the Course* report, where different questions and sample groups were used.

1.3 Background and context

1.3.1 Life at St Andrew's

St Andrew's is a dynamic College which has a strong and proud heritage and boasts a vibrant, high-achieving community. The pride in this community and a history of significant sporting and other success, as well as the richness of College life, emerged as consistent themes throughout the Project's examination.

Gender: St Andrew's is a co-residential College, in which 49% of the students are women.

Geographic and other forms of diversity: Of St Andrew's students, 42% are from the Sydney metropolitan area, 41% are from a NSW rural and regional area; 10% are from interstate and 10% are from overseas. In terms of diversity across other areas, 7% of Survey respondents identified with a sexuality other than straight/heterosexual (including lesbian/gay/homosexual, bisexual, asexual, and undecided/not sure/questioning); and 8% identified as living with a disability. According to St Andrew's College data, three students identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Leadership: St Andrew's is headed by a Principal who is supported by a professional team. The House Committee, headed by the Senior Student, is the organising arm of the Students' Club. All students are members of this Club and leaders are elected on a planned election night in second semester. The Students' Club is an incorporated institution with its own constitution, reflecting its significant autonomy and power as well as its strong responsibility to properly discharge its duties.

Support for students: St Andrew's students are provided with a strong array of support mechanisms. Under the College Life Program, students have access to academic programs, personal development, professional development, social and cultural programs, community service, engagement programs, and the senior common room. Members of the support network available to students include the Vice Principal, the Dean of Students and the Sub-Deans (known as 'the Dean Team'), who are senior students with leadership capability, appointed and trained to ensure that students are supported during their time at College. Similar models of peer support have been shown to be effective because, as students themselves, the Dean Team can understand many of the issues which students are experiencing. During orientation week, 'O Week', students are also supported by a team of approximately 43 mentors and House Committee members who are trained to provide pastoral care. Some mentor/mentee relationships continue beyond O Week.

Activities: A wide range of extracurricular activities are available at St Andrew's, including a diversity of sporting competitions, debating competitions, and performing arts competitions.

O Week: Orientation week, or 'O Week', at St Andrew's involves a number of team-building activities, as well as activities which orient students into the policies, values and systems of the College.

1.3.2 Previous changes and particular strengths

St Andrew's – including the Principal, staff and student leaders – have instituted a number of changes to life at the College over the past few years as well as at the commencement of this Project. The Project Team commends the College on embarking on a process of cultural renewal and notes that a number of the recommendations emerging from this Project build on these recent cultural change initiatives. In particular, these include the 'Holding the Mirror' Project, an internal cultural review process which covered a range of issues of concern to the student community.

A specific strength of St Andrew's cultural review process has been its ongoing and iterative nature, in which results of surveys and discussions have been provided to the student body; changes have then been requested as a result; and students have been involved in policy and procedure reform. As a result of this Project, four staff members (3 women and 1 man) have been appointed as Respectful Relationships Officers and may be called upon to undertake an investigation into breaches of St Andrew's policies. The process has also contained a strong emphasis on student leadership development.

Reforms at St Andrew's also include:

- The Cultural Diversity Project – a group of six students selected from the senior undergraduate cohort to support the elected leaders in the process of change.
- Inclusion of issues of peer pressure, informed consent and inclusive leadership in the training of student leaders.
- The abolition of some of the more extreme practices in O Week.

In making such changes, St Andrew's has built on its considerable existing strengths. Some of these strengths are the deep sense of belonging felt by the majority of students; a record of excellence in a range of areas; and the strong engagement of students in the life of the College, as well as the breadth of extracurricular activities offered to students.

St Andrew's has a 'No Wrong Door Policy' which means that if a student has any enquiries, concerns or suggestions, they can contact anyone in the College community to whom they would feel comfortable talking. To support this policy, all staff, the Dean Team and most student leaders (including Mentors/Academic Buddies; Students' Club leaders and Academic Area Tutors) have completed physical and mental health first responder training.

1.3.3 Areas for strengthening

Supported by the qualitative and quantitative evidence amassed during the Project and a substantial review of relevant literature, the Project Team identified areas of culture that require strengthening at St Andrew's. These areas are not necessarily unique to St Andrew's but left unaddressed will limit the College's ability to provide a safe, supportive and inclusive environment. Areas identified include:

- Ensuring selection for student leadership roles is democratic as well as transparent, rigorous and allows for those students with the best leadership qualities or potential to be selected, rather than those who may be the most popular.
- Ensuring that female students are given tangible opportunities for leadership roles, both as a matter of fairness and equality but also because considerable research confirms that gender-diverse leadership teams in any organisation perform more effectively and have better outcomes than homogenous teams.
- Eliminating all negative aspects of a student hierarchy and prohibiting any activities that may be construed as hazing or are demeaning.
- Eliminating negative aspects of a male-dominated culture, often attached to sporting codes, that can impact on the enjoyment of College by female students and in some cases, their safety and well-being.
- Balancing student independence with College's duty of care to students.
- Ensuring that at all times there is a safe reporting environment and a rigorous complaints handling and support system for students who experience negative and unacceptable behaviours.
- Working with the University of Sydney to ensure the positive integration of St Andrew's College students with the broader University of Sydney community.

2. Principles and Findings

A number of principles informed a set of overarching recommendations which the Project Team has made to all the Colleges participating in this Project. This approach has been taken because, while distinct strengths and challenges were evident in the life of each participating College, all Colleges will benefit from building on their strengths in a more systematic and sustainable way.

A common set of recommendations acknowledges 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 following findings about St Andrew's are grouped under and take their lead from these principles.

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

Within St Andrew's, there are three tiers of leadership: the College Council, staff leadership and student leaders. It is vital that all three tiers of leadership visibly commit to the next phase of the cultural renewal journey, as they demonstrated when committing to involvement in the current Project. There is strong appetite at St Andrew's for ongoing cultural renewal, with leadership at all levels having responsibility for driving meaningful reform. A key driver of the 'Holding the Mirror' project, Vice Principal and Director of Residential Life, Dr Hester Wilson, has stated:

No matter where you come from and who you are in the world, we want... students to know that this is a safe place to be in, that we respect you and want to engage with you... One of the challenges in any community is that you have a dominant culture which is very easy to see, and if you are part of that dominant culture, everything is fine. Yet there are other groups in College that aren't as visible... There are still traditions at College that can exclude minority groups and there needs to be gradual changes to ensure all cultures are comfortable and included.²

A strong theme heard by the Project Team was that students felt supported by staff, peers and the student leadership team, with 89% of St Andrew's students agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement 'I feel supported by my peers and staff' and 84% of St Andrew's students agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement 'I feel supported by student leaders' (on par with the experience of students across the five residential Colleges):

I think one of the great things about our College is that the students have a strong voice through our leaders.

While many aspects of the overall leadership model therefore work well, the Project Team believes that ultimate responsibility for the welfare of students should at all times lie with the Principal, Council, and, in appropriate cases, other staff. Further, there was concern that students with the best leadership qualities or potential are not consistently 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'.

[Student leadership] actually alternates between good ones and bad ones here.

² St Andrew's College 2017, 'Holding the Mirror with Dr Hester Wilson', 30 November 2016, Accessed 1 August 2017, <http://www.standrewscollege.edu.au/holding-the-mirror-with-dr-hester-wilson>.

2.1 Best practice student leadership

Best practice recognises that student leadership is integral, not supplementary, to the successful operation of educational institutions. Developed specifically for university student leadership, the ‘social change model’³ sees all people as potential leaders and leadership as involving collaborative relationships which lead to collective action. This suggests that ‘a conscious focus on values should be at the core of any leadership development effort’.⁴ Best practice affirms the importance of leadership development programs, as well as transparent and rigorous selection processes.⁵

This means that selection processes need to consistently ensure that candidates share and emulate the values of the St Andrew’s community, including respect and inclusion. Formal role descriptions should be developed together with clear criteria for selection that candidates must address. Student leaders also benefit from ongoing support via mentoring, team-building exercises and feedback.

2.2 Gender diversity in student leadership

The Project Team notes that for the first time, in 2018 all three House Executive positions will be held by female students, including the position of Senior Student. There are also a large number of women taking up roles on the 2018 House Committee. To ensure a gender-diverse student leadership team continues into the future, the Project Team believes that ensuring that at least one woman holds one of the top leadership roles is crucial in terms of reflecting the diversity of the group they lead.

A 40:40:20 model is one that a number of organisations adopt to ensure this balance, where 40% of leaders are male; 40% are female and 20% are either gender. The Project Team therefore recommends a 40:40:20 model for the House Executive and House Committee as well as a range of strategies to ensure the role of Senior Student rotates on an equitable basis between male and female students. This model ensures that both male and female students will have the opportunity to compete equally for leadership roles. It is important to recognise that the above model is not inconsistent with merit. 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.’⁶

2.3 The Dean Team

Models for peer assistance exist in many college residential settings across the nation and internationally. These models have been the subject of considerable review and attention. Peer assistants have been described as the ‘eyes and ears’ of an institution – simultaneously fulfilling the roles of a student, role model, counsellor, teacher and administrator.⁷ What’s more, the occasionally serious issues to which these peer assistants respond, including mental health concerns, frequent alcohol-related issues and sexual assault have been described by some observers as putting them into roles ‘more akin to that of a professional’s or first responder’s’.⁸

3 Astin, H & Astin, W 2000, *Leadership Reconsidered: Engaging Higher Education in Social Change*, p. 133.

4 Astin, H & Astin, W 1996, *A Social Change Model of Leadership Development: Guidebook*, Version III, Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles, p. 16.

5 See, e.g., Astin, H & Astin, W 2000, *Leadership Reconsidered: Engaging Higher Education in Social Change*; Hilliard, A 2010, ‘Student Leadership at the University’, *Journal of College Teaching & Learning (TLC)*, 7(2); Dugan, J & Komives, S 2007, *Developing Leadership Capacity in College Students: Findings from a National Study*, National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, College Park, MD.

6 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>.

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

8 *ibid.*, p. 24.

At St Andrew's, the Dean Team takes the role of peer assistants. The Survey revealed that 89% of St Andrew's students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel supported by my peers and staff' (on par with the experience of students across the five residential Colleges). However, echoing concerns expressed across the literature, the Project Team was concerned by the level of responsibility borne by many Deans and Sub-Deans, including the impact of this responsibility on the Dean Team themselves, as well as their capacity to respond effectively and appropriately to sometimes-complex issues. The Project Team was also concerned that the ratio of students to Deans/Sub-Deans (approximately 1:50) impacts on the capacity of the Dean Team to perform their role.

2.4 Student hierarchy

Student hierarchies (beyond formal leadership roles) are a common feature across many residential colleges and generally involve seniority and power increasing as people progress through year levels. These hierarchies are understood as cultivating respect for those with experience but, on occasion, can include conventions that may seem unusual or outdated to outsiders – such as the expectation that first years should enter later and/or sit separately from other year levels when in the College dining hall.

A theme heard during the Project was that this broader hierarchy was important, in 'leveling out' the playing field between new students and engendering respect for those with College experience. Despite the support for this hierarchy in some quarters, 10% of St Andrew's students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'student leaders have too much power over other students' (on par with students across the five residential Colleges). In particular, the Project Team heard concerns about the separation of first years – 'freshers' – from other years in the dining hall and, on occasion, hostile treatment of freshers in general. The Project Team also notes the interaction between student hierarchy and traditions and practices that may amount to hazing. It therefore urges the College to examine this issue in its ongoing process of cultural change.

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

An inclusive College is one where there is respect for all, where diversity is core to its operation, and fairness and equality underpin decision-making. Inclusive practice values the unique contribution that every student makes and is defined as much by what an institution does not accept as what it does. Students told the Project Team:

I'm from a rural school so moving to a new city I definitely wanted to have somewhere to call home and people that were going to care about me. So it's sort of like having a second family really.

You can just be yourself here, whether you're with the guys or the girls or both.

2.5 Belonging

A strong and consistent theme was the sense of belonging and inclusion felt by many students at St Andrew's. Of St Andrew's students surveyed, 83% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel a sense of belonging' (on par with students surveyed across the five residential Colleges). Relevant literature confirms that belonging is vital to a positive student experience. However, it also confirms that residential College students may feel pressure to 'fit in' to the prevailing environment.⁹

9 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. See, e.g., Hamrick, FA, Evans, NJ & Schuh, JH 2002, *Foundations of student affairs practice: How philosophy, theory, and research strengthen educational outcomes*. John Wiley & Sons; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2017, *Supporting Students' College Success: The Role of Assessment of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Competencies*, The National Academies Press: Washington, DC; Tinto, V 1993, *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition*, 2nd ed, University of Chicago Press, Chicago; Pittman, L & Richmond, A 2008, 'University Belonging, Friendship Quality, and Psychological Adjustment During the Transition to College', *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 76:4, pp. 343–362; Cooper, R 2009, 'Constructing Belonging in a Diverse Campus Community', *Journal of College and Character*, Vol X, No.3, February.

To this end, the Survey showed that 6% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I don't fit in at St Andrew's' (on par with the experience of students across the five residential Colleges). Of those who agreed with this statement, the main reasons given were 'social isolation' or 'other students being unwelcoming' and about one-third stated it was due to their 'socioeconomic background':

[There is] pressure to fit a certain personality type at College.

The Project Team found that, with students' desire to fit into the dominant culture at St Andrew's, there may be pressure to engage in certain activities or behaviour. This is discussed below.

2.5.1 Diversity and fitting in

A theme explored in discussion groups was the diversity of the St Andrew's community. Students commented:

I was attracted to the idea that you'd be coming to this environment where there's people from so many...diverse backgrounds.

I think having a range of students at St Andrew's – gay, bi, straight – adds so much to the College.

As noted above, data from St Andrew's shows that in terms of the geographic diversity of students: 42% are from the Sydney metropolitan area; 41% are from a NSW rural and regional area; 10% are from interstate; and 10% are from overseas. Further, according to St Andrew's data, 18 students at St Andrew's are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background and 3 students identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. 7% of St Andrew's students surveyed identified with a sexuality other than heterosexual (including gay/lesbian/homosexual, bisexual and undecided/not sure/questioning). Further, 8% of students surveyed reported having a 'disability that has lasted or is likely to last 6 months or more that has an impact on day to day life'. According to St Andrew's College data, three students identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

However, a small percentage of surveyed St Andrew's students (6%) reported experiencing remarks or behaviour signifying 'intolerance of diversity', while a further 22% reported that they had witnessed these behaviours (on par with the experience of students across the five residential Colleges):¹⁰

I would never disclose I am bisexual here.

It's not overt homophobia but subtle... like in conversations, people will use words like 'faggot' and 'that's so gay'.

2.5.2 'Hooking up', having sex and fitting in

While a strong theme was the positive nature of the co-residential environment at St Andrew's, as well as the strong sense of sexual independence among students, this did not mitigate the pressure a number felt to 'hook up' with other students:

There's kind of, just the attitude around sex is that everyone's liberal with it... that's just not what everyone's values are... But it's kind of what everyone expects...

There's a hypersexual environment here and sex happens quite frequently... So there's a kind of pressure, I guess, to have sex because everyone's doing it.

Of St Andrew's students surveyed, 11% (7% of men and a significantly higher proportion of women, 16%) reported that they felt like they should have sex in order to fit in (on par with surveyed students across the five residential Colleges).

¹⁰ 'Intolerance of diversity' includes behaviours such as 'pressure to hide or deny their sexual orientation and/or gender identity to fit in or be accepted', 'homophobic slurs directed at them', or 'racist slurs directed at them'.

2.5.3 Alcohol and fitting in

Access to alcohol and its excessive consumption are concerning features of residential college life. Though students rightly noted that alcohol as a social lubricant is a significant factor for the broader Australian community, among college student populations, research confirms that excessive and potentially harmful consumption of alcohol is a substantial feature of student life.¹¹

Of St Andrew's students surveyed, 53% agreed or strongly agreed that 'drinking helps me to socialise and make friends at St Andrew's' (on par with students across the five Colleges). While this did not necessarily lead to a sense of pressure to drink, 14% of St Andrew's students reported that they had experienced pressure to drink alcohol when they didn't want to (on par with the experience of students across the five residential Colleges). A clear theme through the Project was that drinking was critical to finding one's 'place' at College:

There is such a big drinking culture here so if you don't drink, it can be pretty hard to have fun.

[There is a] heavy drinking culture, pressure to drink to fit in.

2.6 Relationship with the broader University of Sydney community

A strong theme emerging throughout the Project was College students' sense of marginalisation – and even victimisation – by other students and staff from the wider University of Sydney community. Of St Andrew's students surveyed, 57% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel stigmatised by the University of Sydney students and staff because I go to St Andrew's College' (on par with the experience of students across the five residential Colleges).

Students explained that when there are media reports of poor behaviour in Colleges, even if the reports relate to other Colleges, they can be particularly targeted. Male students stated that they are unreasonably labelled as sexist, while female students commented that they can be labelled as 'weak' or victims.

The Project Team was particularly concerned to hear about a small number of incidents where College students were subjected to excluding behaviour or comments by University staff:

I've had five or six tutes where the tutor was like 'Oh, you might drop a brick on someone's head because you're from St Andrew's'.

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

However, there was a view that College students on occasion may themselves 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.

11 See, e.g., Kypri, K, Cronin, M & Wright, C 2005, 'Do university students drink more hazardously than their non-student peers?' *Addiction*, 100, pp. 713–714; Ham, L & Hope, D 2003, 'College students and problematic drinking: A review of the literature', *Clinical Psychology Review*, 23, pp. 719–759; 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; 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; Schofield, T 2014, *Alcohol use and harm minimisation among Australian university students: Final report to University Colleges Australia*; Hughes, C 2012, 'All Beer and Skittles? A Qualitative Pilot Study of the Role of Alcohol in University College Life', *Australian Universities Review*, 54, p. 22–28; and 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>.

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', be supported to undertake their university studies and be able to engage with the dynamic intellectual, cultural and social life of the College community. Attitudes and behaviours that reflect the values of the College should be modelled and practised at all times.

As noted above, a considerable strength at St Andrew's is the range of extracurricular activities available. On par with the results from the five other residential Colleges, 94% of St Andrew's students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I get involved in activities and social events organised through my College'.

2.7 The place of sport

A strong theme throughout the Project was the pride many St Andrew's students felt in the sporting successes of the College, with St Andrew's winning the Rawson Cup every year since 2010 and more often than all the other Colleges combined:

I'm a very competitive person on the sporting field. [St Andrew's has] allowed me to continue with something I love, at a high level and at a place I love.

However, in the student interviews, discussion groups and Survey responses, a perception emerged that male sport not only attracted greater prestige than female sport, but that this emphasis contributed to a hyper-masculine culture. For example, students commented:

...since the teams by nature are men only, there is a great tendency within those teams to objectify and sexualise women... [M]any women at Andrew's are too scared or uncomfortable with challenging the authority of these men.

I actually refuse to attend Rawson and Rosebowl events because I am so offended by the chants that get sung at those events... [They] are derogatory about women... [and] about the gay and lesbian community.

2.8 O Week

Students are introduced to life at St Andrew's during Orientation week or 'O Week'. A strong theme throughout the Project was how enjoyable many students found this period:

I thought it was so much fun. The best thing was...that it just forced you to make friends. You couldn't have come out of O Week without friends.

Not everything was easy, but I wouldn't have changed it.

My mentor was amazing. She was so supportive and made me and our group feel very comfortable.

The experience of O Week prior to changes in 2017 caused some students to reflect that it had become less confronting:

O Week was very different [some] years ago when I did it. It was far more intense.

The Project Team supports the College's efforts to ensure that O Week is safe and inclusive for all students:

We stress to freshers that O Week is College life on steroids and that what goes on at O Week isn't indicative of everyday College life.

However, a 'big drinking culture' during O Week and an indirect pressure to participate in activities – generally as a way of fitting in – was still apparent:

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

Irrespective of the fact that we are told every activity is totally voluntary, the enormous social pressure to be involved and the fear of missing experiences...meant that most activities aren't voluntary.

The Project Team heard that this was particularly the case in relation to 'the Square', a practice which has continued for a number of years. In describing the Square, one student stated:

Stories and songs...are handed down with the freshers all kneeling on the 'black square' in the common room. Mentors go around the square squirting water and alcohol from 'goon bags' into the mouths [and] faces of the freshers.

The Project Team heard that the duration of the activity has been shortened in recent years, with students free to leave at any time. The Project Team also heard that many students found it a fun experience which contributed to bonding:

It's meant to be like a moment where it's like oh... you're now actually an Androvian, kind of thing. Directly after the Square...that's when it clicked for me. We were so much closer after it.

However, the Project Team also heard that some students had found it a very difficult experience, as well as one in which it was hard not to participate for fear of being seen as a failure:

I passed out in the Square. I had to do it because I didn't want to seem like a loser.

The Project Team has made recommendations about reforms to O Week across the Colleges that include an emphasis on harm minimisation. 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.¹² The recommendations of the Project Team reflect these priorities.

2.9 The place of alcohol at St Andrew's

St Andrew's bar, the Highlander, serves alcohol to students over the age of 18 years.

A strong feature of discussions with students and comments provided by students in the Survey was the place of alcohol at St Andrew's. The Project Team examined the days of the week and times of the year when alcohol consumption was at its highest. The Project Team also identified that alcohol is provided on a highly subsidised or no-cost basis.

The Survey revealed that 20% of St Andrew's students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'there is too much focus on drinking alcohol at St Andrew's College' (on par with the experience of students across the five residential Colleges). Further, 14% of St Andrew's students surveyed have experienced pressure to drink alcohol when they did not want to and 2% reported pressure to take drugs when they didn't want to (on par with results across the five residential Colleges). Meanwhile, 32% of students also reported that they had witnessed or observed other students being pressured to drink alcohol or take drugs when they did not want to (on par with students across the five residential Colleges).¹³

12 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 7 Nov 2017, <https://www.higheredjobs.com/HigherEdCareers/interviews.cfm?ID=402>.

13 Only a small percentage of St Andrew's students reported that they have experienced pressure to take drugs when they didn't want to (2%). Of the 32% of St Andrew's students that reported they have witnessed or observed pressure to drink alcohol or take drugs, 30% witnessed pressure to drink alcohol and 7% witnessed pressure to take drugs. Of these: 15% witnessed pressure of another St Andrew's resident; 16% witnessed pressure of another St Andrew's resident and a resident of another college; and 1% witnessed pressure of another college resident.

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). It can also lead to damage to College property:

I have taken people to RPA five times because of alcohol.

Some boys can be very physical when they get drunk. It can be quite scary. On a big night, property can be damaged.

Given that opportunities for alcohol consumption at St Andrew's are frequent (as they are across other Colleges), the Project Team has made recommendations for a broad-ranging harm minimisation approach across the Colleges. This includes reforms to the demand by and supply of alcohol to the student body, as well as recommendations regarding how it is managed.

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

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

Safety in the St Andrew's 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 students. A sense of safety is therefore critical to allow students to settle successfully into College and to remain there.

2.10 Psychological and physical safety

St Andrew's Respectful Relationship Policy clearly establishes the College's zero tolerance of disrespectful attitudes and unsafe behaviours:

College Members are expected to maintain respectful relationships always and in all circumstances. Discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, assault, indecent assault and sexual assault are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.¹⁴

A strong theme from the discussion groups and from the Survey was that the majority of St Andrew's students felt safe and secure in their College:

I believe 100% this is a safe College and we all look after each other. I have never felt that I couldn't stand up for myself if I needed to.

However, 10% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I do not always feel safe at St Andrew's' (on par with the experience of students across the five residential Colleges):

[I feel unsafe] when certain boys get drunk and are very loud, disruptive and quite threatening.

There is a 'jock' group and when they are drunk they can be really intimidating.

The issue of mental health was raised by students in discussion groups. 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 members of the Dean Team. Such options are important to ensure these student leaders do not feel overwhelmed by their roles and to minimise their risk of vicarious trauma.

¹⁴ St Andrew's College 2017, 'Respectful relationship policy', Accessed 19 July 2017, <http://policy.standrewscollege.edu.au/index.php/policy-documents/respectful-relationships/respectful-relationships-policy>.

2.11 Bullying and ‘hazing’

So-called ‘hazing’, a term used by students themselves, can often be associated with traditions and rituals of an institution. Hazing can be 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.*¹⁵

*...any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person’s willingness to participate.*¹⁶

Notably, willingness to participate or the giving of consent does not mean that an activity is not deemed to be hazing. In many situations, individuals may be told they do not have to participate in an activity; however, group dynamics and a desire to ‘fit in’ can make refusal or opting out a seemingly impossible option. For example, as a student stated:

Irrespective of the fact that we are told every activity is totally voluntary, the enormous social pressure to be involved and the fear of missing experiences and meeting new people mean that most activities aren’t voluntary. Also, once you begin an activity, leaving it is very difficult.

This is supported in the work of Parks and Southerland who state that ‘the question [of willingness to participate] is often whether the individual had the psychological wherewithal to resist situational or contextual demands placed on him or her.’¹⁷

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.¹⁸ In many instances, alcohol and other substance abuse is a common feature of hazing.¹⁹

Of concern, 32% of students surveyed reported experiencing ‘bullying or intimidation’, ‘hazing’, or ‘pressure to participate in activities that were humiliating or intimidating to you or other students’ since commencing at St Andrew’s College (significantly higher than 19% of surveyed students across the five residential Colleges).²⁰ The Project Team acknowledges that hazing can be subject to a number of different interpretations by students, some of whom consider it to be ‘fun’ and not dangerous or demeaning. There was a view from some students that hazing at St Andrew’s is not serious and that people do not have to participate in any activities which make them feel uncomfortable:

Hazing wasn’t bad! Puts you in your place at College. In fact, I loved it.

Hazing isn’t a big deal. It’s actually fun.

It’s just part of College culture and...therefore not an issue and not necessary to report.

However, an alternative perspective of hazing was also provided:

Once you begin an activity, leaving it is very difficult. In those situations where I have feared that I may be physically hurt...there is little choice whether to participate or not.

A lot of fresher men are asked to perform [certain] activities... They are asked to do this and can say no, but if they do they will lose their image as a ‘man’.

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

16 Allan, EJ & Madden, M 2008, ‘Hazing in view: College students at risk. Initial findings from the National Study of Student Hazing’, p. 8.

17 Parks, GS & Southerland, TF 2013, ‘The Psychology and Law of Hazing Consent’, *Marquette Law Review* Vol 97, Issue 1, p.1.

18 Hazingprevention.org ‘What hazing looks like’. Accessed 10 July 2017. <http://hazingprevention.org/home/hazing/facts-what-hazing-looks-like>.

19 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.

20 Of these surveyed students, 7% reported experiencing ‘bullying or intimidation’ (on par with students surveyed across the five residential colleges), 27% reported experiencing ‘hazing’ (significantly higher than the 13% of students surveyed across the five residential colleges), and 15% reported experiencing ‘pressure to participate in activities that were humiliating or intimidating to you or other students’ (significantly higher than the 10% of students surveyed across the five residential colleges). Note, as students could select more than one category, the percentages may add up to more than the total.

Certainly, 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 from those that present risk of harm or can be humiliating. While the Project Team does not recommend eliminating the many positive and affiliative activities, it does believe St Andrew’s and its students in particular, would benefit from identifying and then reforming those activities that pose risk.

In relation to ‘exclusion or isolation,’ or experiencing ‘malicious rumours’ the Survey found that 15% of St Andrew’s students surveyed reported experiencing these behaviours (on par with the results across the five residential Colleges).²¹ An equal number of women and men reported this experience (compared to the significantly higher proportion of women (19%) across the five residential Colleges who reported this compared to men (10%)).

Beyond this, 7% of St Andrew’s students surveyed reported experiencing ‘bullying or intimidation’ since commencing at St Andrew’s. This figure is on par with the experience across the five residential Colleges surveyed. The benchmark definition for bullying is that proposed by Olweus²² who pioneered work in bullying among school students. He suggested a student is being bullied when the individual:

*...is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students.
...An additional criterion of bullying is an imbalance in strength (an asymmetric power relationship).²³*

The Project Team notes the importance of bystanders in responding to and preventing bullying, intimidation and hazing. Indeed, the Survey revealed that, on par with the other residential Colleges, 23% of surveyed St Andrew’s students reported that they have witnessed or observed ‘exclusion or isolation’ of another St Andrew’s student(s) or ‘malicious rumours’ directed at another St Andrew’s student; while 17% reported they have witnessed or observed ‘exclusion or isolation’ or ‘malicious rumours’ directed at a St Andrew’s student and a student from another College. A further 53% of surveyed students reported that they have witnessed ‘bullying or intimidation’ (23%), ‘pressure to participate in activities that were humiliating or intimidating to them or other students’ (34%), or ‘hazing’ (40%) since commencing at St Andrew’s with the vast majority targeting a St Andrew’s student.²⁴

2.12 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. Allan and Madden’s 2008 *National Study of Student Hazing* is the most comprehensive survey to date of hazing at US tertiary institutions.²⁵ Practices the researchers identify as hazing include:

- Drinking games, including 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.²⁶

21 Of these students, 6% reported experiencing ‘exclusion or isolation’ and 13% reported experiencing ‘malicious or hurtful rumours directed at you’ (on par with the experience of students across the five residential Colleges). Note, as students could select more than one category, the sum of categories may add up to more than the total.

22 Olweus, D 1995, ‘Bullying or peer abuse at school: Facts and intervention’. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 4 (6), pp. 196–200.

23 *ibid.*

24 Of these, 30% witnessed or observed these behaviours of St Andrew’s students; 28% witnessed or observed these behaviours of St Andrew’s students and students from another University of Sydney residential College, and 7% witnessed or observed this of a student of a different University of Sydney residential College student.

25 Allan, EJ & Madden, M 2008, ‘Hazing in view: College students at risk. Initial findings from the National Study of Student Hazing’, p. 36.

26 *ibid.*, p. 18.

Four key themes to combat hazing and promote student safety emerge from the evidence:²⁷

- Clear policies which communicate zero tolerance for hazing or any other behaviour that compromises student safety.
- Comprehensive education about hazing and alternatives to it provided for all students.
- Support for victims, including through appropriate reporting options and discipline for perpetrators.
- Support by institutional leadership that models values; enforces and is accountable to its policies; and that works in concert with students.

Hazing prevention policies need to be implemented carefully and with student involvement to avoid backlash. St Andrew's College has already demonstrated its willingness to work with students by involving them substantively in its cultural renewal project, *Holding the Mirror*, and the Project Team encourages the College to continue this journey by comparing any hazing traditions at the College and responses to these against best practice.

2.13 Sexual misconduct

Recently there has been considerable media attention, both in Australia and overseas, about sexual misconduct in residential college settings. Incidents ranging from sexism and misogyny right through to sexual harassment and sexual assault have been reported. Some incidents have resulted in policy changes, including the implementation of stronger disciplinary and accountability measures.

The issue of sexual misconduct at St Andrew's was explored in discussion groups and during one-on-one interviews. While no disclosure of sexual assault was made directly to the Project Team in one-on-one interviews or in discussion groups, students were keen to share their views on the issue as well as on sexual harassment and sexism. Most students observed that the women at the College experience higher levels of these behaviours than the men, and some pointed to the prevalence of these issues in the wider university and community.

The Australian Human Rights Commission's *National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities* reported that:

- Alcohol was often identified as a factor that contributed to people's experiences of sexual assault and sexual harassment.
- The Commission received a number of submissions that reported sexual assault while the person being assaulted was unconscious or severely impaired due to the influence of alcohol.
- A particularly large number of submissions identified alcohol as a factor contributing to sexual assault and sexual harassment that occurred in University residential accommodation.²⁸

The Survey revealed that 23% of women at St Andrew's experienced sexist remarks directed at them, significantly higher than the experience of women across the five residential Colleges (14%). Of male St Andrew's students surveyed, 3% reported experiencing sexist remarks (on par with 2% of males across the five residential Colleges).

27 *ibid.* Also, de Klerk, V 2013, 'Initiation, Hazing or Orientation? A case study at a South African University', *International Research in Education*, July, 1:1, p. 99; Indiana Dept of Education n.d. *Sexual Harassment and Hazing: Your Actions Make a Difference!*; LaFerney, MC, 2016. 'You Can Help Victims of Hazing Recover from Psychological and Physical Harm', *Current Psychiatry*, 15(3), p. 72; Sonoma State University n.d. *Helping Students in Distress*, p. 15; Senate Orientation Activities Review Board 2016, *Orientation Week Policy Manual*, Queens University; Campo, S, Poulos, G & Sipple, JW 2005, 'Prevalence and Profiling: Hazing Among College Students and Points of Intervention', *American Journal of Health Behaviour*, March 21.

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

2.13.1 Sexual harassment and sexual assault

The Survey results reveal that 18% of St Andrew's students surveyed have experienced sexual harassment²⁹ (on par with students across the five residential Colleges). Of women surveyed at St Andrew's, a significantly higher proportion (30%) have experienced sexual harassment compared with men (7%). A similar result was observed across the five residential Colleges.

Importantly, when a list of behaviours that constitute sexual harassment was presented, 18% of St Andrew's students acknowledged they had experienced one or more of the behaviours. However, when students were directly asked if they had experienced sexual harassment, only 12% indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment. This indicates a gap in some students' knowledge of what constitutes sexual harassment.

The vast majority of the incidents of sexual harassment occurred within the St Andrew's residence or grounds, with a small number also occurring at a different University of Sydney College residence or grounds. In the majority of incidents, fellow students from St Andrew's engaged in the behaviour. The vast majority of the incidents involved males only, while a small number of incidents reported by St Andrew's men involved females only or both males and females.

For St Andrew's women, the most common forms of sexual harassment included 'unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing' (18%); 'inappropriate physical contact' (12%); 'sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended' (11%); 'intrusive questions about your private life/physical appearance that made you feel offended' (11%); 'sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body' (6%); 'inappropriate commentary, images or film of you distributed on some form of social media without your consent' (6%) and 'inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated' (6%).

For St Andrew's College men, the most common forms of sexual harassment experienced included 'sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended' (4%); 'sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body' (2%); 'inappropriate physical contact' (2%); and 'sexually explicit pictures, posters or gifts that made you feel offended' (2%).

As noted above, the importance of bystander intervention in responding to and preventing unacceptable behaviour, including sexual harassment, was highlighted by the Survey. The Survey revealed that 43% of St Andrew's students surveyed had witnessed or observed sexual harassment since commencing at St Andrew's (on par across the five residential Colleges).³⁰

29 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)'.

30 Of St Andrew's students that reported they had witnessed or observed sexual harassment: 30% reported that the subject of the sexual harassment was another St Andrews resident; 18% reported that the subjects included both a St Andrews resident and a resident of another College; 5% reported it was a resident of another College. The most common forms of sexual harassment witnessed or observed included 'sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended' (31%); 'unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing' (21%); 'inappropriate physical contact' (19%); 'inappropriate commentary/images/film distributed on social media without consent' (18%); 'requests or pressure for sex, or other sexual acts' (15%); 'intrusive questions about your private life/physical appearance that made you feel offended' (15%); 'sexual gestures, indecent exposure or inappropriate display of the body' (14%); 'sexually explicit pictures, posters or gifts that could be offensive' (13%) and 'inappropriate staring or leering that would be intimidating' (10%).

The Survey revealed that 8% of women surveyed (nine survey respondents) and 2% of men surveyed (two survey respondents) reported that they have experienced actual or attempted sexual assault³¹ since starting at St Andrew's (on par with the results across the five residential Colleges). All but one of the incidents occurred at the College residence or grounds, with one occurring at another University of Sydney residential College. In just under two-thirds of incidents, the students engaged in the behaviour were fellow students from College (of these, the majority were in a more senior year at College), with the other incidents involving either a student from another residential College or a non-College resident student. A further 6% of surveyed students reported that they had witnessed or observed 'actual or attempted sexual assault' (on par with the results across the five residential Colleges). Significantly more St Andrew's women reported they had witnessed or observed this (11%) than St Andrew's men (2%) (also on par with the results across the five residential Colleges). It is important to note that this data is not comparable with results reported in the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Change the Course* report, where different questions and samples were used.

Students shared the following insights and experiences with the Project Team:

Sexual harassment and sexual assault are treated as a joke by some students.

Boys in packs don't respect women at College.

2.13.2 St Andrew's College's policy response to sexual misconduct

As noted above, St Andrew's Holding the Mirror project, as well as its Respectful Relationships Policy make very clear that the College has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual misconduct. The policy clearly defines both sexual assault and sexual harassment and strongly states that these behaviours are 'not acceptable and will not be tolerated' and are 'abuses of power'.³² The policy also clearly explains the notion of informed consent and identifies the circumstances when consent can only be freely given (e.g. that the person is over 16 years and that a person is fully conscious and not intoxicated).

The Project Team commends St Andrew's for the strong statements and clear information in its policy, as well as the development of resources for students on investigation pathways. However, there was a view from some students that some of the resources were difficult to navigate, particularly the 'investigation pathway' flowchart.

31 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.'

32 St Andrew's College 2017, *Respectful relationships policy*, Internal document, p. 1.

2.13.3 Best practice for combatting sexual misconduct

Best practice standards for preventing and managing sexual misconduct have been established by international and Australian studies. Five key principles emerge:³³

1. Residential colleges must 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 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. Prevention education programs should be grounded in an understanding of gender, other identities and related power dynamics, as well as ethical relationships.
5. Institutions must **implement procedures to ensure transparency and disclosure, and conduct self-assessments to track policy efficacy**.

2.14 Disclosure and reporting

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 behavior, particularly when that behaviour is sexual misconduct.³⁴ These findings are consistent with the findings of the Survey of St Andrew's students and with the insights gained during discussion groups and one-on-one interviews.

Of the 39 students surveyed (18%) who reported experiencing sexual harassment, just over half sought assistance for the most recent incident, mainly from another College resident (who is not a staff member) or friends and family, with a small number seeking assistance from a Dean, Sub-Dean, Senior Student or other senior student. A small number of students formally reported the incident, with barriers to reporting including the student thinking they could sort it out themselves; thinking they did not need help; or thinking it was not serious enough.

33 See, e.g., Culture of Respect 2017, *CORE Blueprint: A Strategic Roadmap for Addressing Campus Sexual Violence*; Leidig, M 1995, 'The continuum of violence against women: Psychological and physical consequences', *Journal of American College Health*, 40, pp. 149–155; MacDonald, P & Flood, M 2012, *Encourage. Support. Act!: Bystander Approaches to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace*, University of New South Wales; Australian Human Rights Centre 2017, *On Safe Ground: Strengthening Australian University Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment*, p. 60.; and Our Watch 2017, *Putting the prevention of violence against women into practice: How to change the story*. End Rape on Campus has also developed a comprehensive model for building what it calls a 'survivor-centric policy' in End Rape on Campus Australia 2017, *Connecting the Dots: Understanding Sexual Assault in University Communities*; see also Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences 2016, 'Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment Policy and Procedures for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Harvard University', pp. 21–22; and Culture of Respect 2017, *CORE Blueprint: A Strategic Roadmap for Addressing Campus Sexual Violence*, 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'; Center for Changing Our Campus Culture 2016, 'Addressing Gender-Based Violence on College Campuses: Guide to a Comprehensive Model', p. 21. See also Jewkes, R, Sen, P & Garcia-Moreno, C 2002, 'Sexual Violence' in Krug, EG, Dahlberg, LL, Mercy, JA, Zwi, AB & Lozano, R (eds.), *World Report on Violence and Health*, Geneva: World Health Organization; and 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.

34 See, e.g., Walsh, W, Banyard, V, Moynihan, M, Ward, S & Cohn, E 2010, 'Disclosure and service use on a College campus', *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*, 11, pp. 134–151; and Zinzow, H & Thompson, M 2011, 'Barriers to reporting sexual victimization: Prevalence and correlates among undergraduate women', *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma*, 20, pp. 711–725.

Of the 11 students surveyed (5%) who reported experiencing actual or attempted sexual assault, two-thirds sought support or assistance (mainly from another College resident or friend or family member outside the College), but only one student made a formal report. The main barriers to formal reporting included the student feeling embarrassed or ashamed or not thinking it was serious enough.

Highlighting the importance of bystander intervention in addressing sexual harassment, of the St Andrew's students who reported witnessing or observing sexual harassment, 41% stated that they took action as a result. Specific actions taken among those who witnessed sexual harassment included: 28% talked to the target of the behaviour; 15% talked to the offender; 12% spoke to a student in a position of responsibility for the welfare of students (e.g. a member of the Dean Team); and 3% spoke to a member of College staff.³⁵

As described above, the College has strengthened its reporting mechanisms through the Holding the Mirror project and the appointment of four Respectful Relationships Officers, as well as its No Wrong Door Policy. These initiatives will encourage stronger reporting in the future and establish clearer pathways for resolving issues. The Project Team commends St Andrew's for recognising that the officer appointed by the Principal for each reported issue must be acceptable to the reporting parties, including a choice of a male or female Respectful Relationships Officer.

³⁵ Students may have selected more than one action taken and therefore results will not add to 100%.

3. Conclusion

The Project Team gained a rich insight into the life of St Andrew's College. The College's impressive student body engaged with the Project Team with honesty, candour and enthusiasm. Without question, the St Andrew's community has much of which it should be proud, including the commitment of its Principal, staff and student leaders; the involvement of its student body in rich extracurricular activity; its sporting, cultural and academic achievements; and the breadth and diversity of College life. In particular, the Project Team noted the strong sense of loyalty and belonging felt by students. This is core to a positive College experience.

The St Andrew's community can be proud of the changes it has made in recent years. The impact of these changes is evident and noted favourably throughout this report, including the substantial and ongoing Holding the Mirror project.

Traditions and conventions exist at St Andrew's, many of which are testament to a strong and positive culture. There are, however, others which require review and possible elimination. Attitudes and behaviours may also endure in some quarters which, if left unaddressed, will prevent St Andrew's realising its full potential for the community it serves.

While all areas for action identified in the recommendations are critical areas for reform, the Project Team particularly notes areas related to: dismantling negative aspects of the student hierarchy; identifying, then eliminating, practices that may be construed as hazing or which pose risk; continuing to address issues around alcohol; continuing to have a strong response to sexual misconduct; and ensuring at all times a safe reporting environment within the College.

The Project Team has made a range of recommendations which it believes will ensure that St Andrew's will continue to work towards being a safe, respectful and inclusive environment. The suggested reforms are designed to build on the good work already underway, and lay the foundations for many successful decades to come.

Young Australians are a rapidly changing and diverse population, coming through the doors of a residential college with a sense of excitement, a new adult status, and a still-developing mind. The responsibilities of a residential college are immense and the possibilities for continuous improvement – the mission of any well-functioning organisation – just as great.

The Project Team has no doubt that St Andrew's will continue on its well-established path of cultural renewal. In so doing, it will build upon its many strengths and continue to be a strong leader among colleges and universities across the nation.

4. Recommendations

The following recommendations build upon the promising strategies underway at St Andrew's College and the other Colleges. They are designed to ensure that those strategies are sustainable into 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 one way or another 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 St Andrew's College and the other Colleges receive 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 leadership – 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 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-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-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, Principal, 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 Principal and the incoming Senior Student, House Executive and Members of the House Committee should develop and deliver a clear and strong written statement (signed by all) that articulates the importance of cultural renewal and 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 Constitution, 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 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 Principal 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-residential Colleges, a gender balance of student leadership teams is achieved including by:
 - » Implementing a 40:40:20 rule for House Executive and House Committee 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 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; (e) electing male and female joint Senior Students, one of whom takes the Senior Student 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. Council should continue to support 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 is one where there is respect for all, where diversity is celebrated as a core feature of the institutions, 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 its problematic connotations and expectations.
16. Orientation should be closely overseen by College staff with assistance from the Dean Team 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 and supply to and the demand for 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 and members of the Dean Team should undergo first responder training by an expert in trauma 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 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 the Dean Team 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 204 St Andrews students participated in the Survey. Students were emailed an invitation to take part and received up to two reminders during the course of fieldwork. All St Andrews students over the age of 18 years were invited to take part (n=320). Student details were passed onto the Social Research Centre from St Andrews 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 64% response rate¹ (compared with 69% across the five residential Colleges). The Survey provided an alternative avenue for St Andrews 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 and the Social Research Centre – a highly regarded social research organisation based in the Research School of Social Sciences at ANU. The Survey instrument built upon existing survey instruments including those used for the *National Sexual Harassment* survey;² the *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.

The Survey responses were weighted to ensure they reflected and were representative of the make-up of the College student population including by gender, 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.

1 The response rate was defined as the number of interviews divided by the total number of students invited to take part.

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*.

Interpreting the results

The table below presents margins of error associated with various survey estimates. These take into account both the achieved response rate (64%) and population of St Andrew's students (320). This table should be used to assist with the interpretation of results. For example, if 50% of St Andrew's students agree with a statement, we can be 95% confident that the true estimate is between 46% and 54%.

Survey estimate	Associated margin of error, at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$)	Associated margin of error, at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$)
	St Andrew's College	All Colleges
50%	+/- 4.1%	+/- 1.7%
40%/60%	+/- 4.1%	+/- 1.7%
30%/70%	+/- 3.8%	+/- 1.6%
20%/80%	+/- 3.4%	+/- 1.4%
10%/90%	+/- 2.5%	+/- 1.1%
5%/95%	+/- 1.8%	+/- 0.8%

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

