



St Mark's College
ADELAIDE

Upholding our values: progress report update on cultural renewal

February 2022 (updated May 2022)

As we enter the 2022 academic year, St Mark's College reaffirms its ongoing commitment to upholding the vision and values of the College, with our strong emphasis on ensuring the safety, respect and dignity of all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or any other attribute. We also reaffirm our commitment to cultural renewal. This report provides an update on our progress on this, including on our Action Plan for Cultural Renewal.

2022 sees a major expansion in student support come to fruition, with the newly-created Director of Wellbeing role, along with the new position of Adviser & Special Projects, a new administrative support officer in the Front Office, and further expansions to the College's student leadership teams. We have also enlisted external support services, with an external clinical psychologist visiting the College regularly to provide bulk-billed onsite appointments for students who need this support. The College will in May be announcing an external consultant on sexual harassment and sexual assault, from whom members of the College may seek advice (further details below). This expands upon the foundation we are already building to provide the best possible wellbeing support to our students.

This significant expansion in staff support has occurred alongside a consultation process for the adoption of a new strategic plan, titled "Towards our second century: a strategy for St Mark's College." Following extensive consultation, the College Board formally adopted the new strategic plan in April 2022. One of the top strategic priorities in this plan is "promoting student wellbeing and belonging in a safe, respectful, diverse, and inclusive community", including through our commitment to "uphold our values of respect, excellence, inclusion, integrity, service, and community".

Cultural renewal is part of our deeply-held commitment to providing a values-based community with a culture of respect, dignity, genuine inclusion and safety for all.

This report provides an update on actions undertaken since the [February 2020](#) report, and may be read in conjunction with the [Action Plan for Cultural Renewal](#) and previous [progress reports](#).

Important actions include:

- **Expansion of staff support options for students:**
 - In January 2022 Mr Stuart Meldrum, a qualified psychologist, moved from Dean into his new role as the inaugural Director of Wellbeing with a focus on the positive promotion of wellbeing skills as well as on supporting students in need of assistance
 - In January 2022 Dr Andrés Villamizar commenced as the College's new Dean but due to ill health stood down. In succession, Professor Jonathon Allen was appointed Dean in April 2022.

- In January 2022 Dr Katrina Stats commenced as the new Director of Learning
 - In January 2022 Dr Rachel Buxton moved from Director of Learning into her new role as Adviser & Special Projects, where amongst other things she serves as a student mentor.
 - Professor Don Markwell continues to serve as Head of College. The position title, Head of College, was adopted by the College in 2019, replacing the more traditional title of Master.
- **Expansion of access to external support services:**
 - In 2021 the College engaged Clinical Psychologist Aaron Neaves (of May Health, previously Neaves and Menne) to provide on-site, bulk-billed treatment to students with a Mental Health Treatment Plan. This expanded on pre-existing support, whereby the College facilitated students to access counselling and psychology services off-site through the Neaves and Menne clinic in North Adelaide. In 2022, as in Semester 2, 2021, Aaron Neaves is attending the College monthly for scheduled appointments, in addition to any other support required.
 - An announcement will be made in May 2022 of an external consultant on sexual harassment and sexual assault (further details below).
- **Consultation on the College's draft strategic plan:**
 - As mentioned above, the strategic plan has a strong emphasis on student wellbeing and belonging, including through upholding our commitment to student safety, respect, and inclusion.
- **Expansion of student leadership teams:**
 - In 2021 and 2022 the College has expanded and clarified student leadership roles. Key activities have included the expansion of Flat Warden roles, to ensure better support for students living in the College's flats, and the refinement of the Academic Coordinator roles to provide expanded academic and career support to students, with visible benefits from increased peer-to-peer support.
 - The position of Indigenous Student Advisor was created in 2021, and in 2022 four Indigenous students hold leadership positions in the College.
 - For 2021 and continuing in 2022 the College has introduced bursaries for voluntary elected student leadership roles, including for all College Club Committee members and also the President of the student-run Charitable Foundation. These bursaries help to remove a financial barrier for financially disadvantaged students considering running for leadership roles.
 - The College also offers substantial bursaries for appointed student leadership roles, such as Assistant Dean, Residential Advisors, Indigenous Student Advisor, Senior Academic Tutor, Academic Coordinators, and others.
- **Further proactive prevention and response to harassment or assault, including through encouraging reporting:**
 - Action is always taken promptly where any report of harassment or assault is made.
 - New student orientation strongly encourages students to report any concerns to staff and student leaders, and this message is reinforced to all students throughout the year in a variety of ways.

- Students, student leaders and staff receive regular encouragement to report any concerns, including through written materials, posters displayed throughout the College, in training sessions, in addresses to the student body, and in other interactions.
 - Observation suggests that students are increasingly confident to report issues of concern to both student leaders and staff. Student leaders are also increasingly proactive in reporting issues upwards to staff. Each year in this reporting period we have observed both new and returning students showing greater confidence in reporting issues, evidenced by them reporting smaller incidents sooner rather than waiting for them to develop into more serious matters, students reporting more serious incidents more immediately, and students reporting historic matters.
 - Extensive discussions during student leadership training (including during pre-appointment training, Leadership Week training and pre-Welcome Week training) about events and positive and negative aspects of College culture help to ensure continual improvement of College culture. This includes, for example, providing the College Club Committee with deidentified feedback on the previous year's events, and specific discussions around ensuring all events are genuinely inclusive, including for students who are underage and who are non-drinkers.
 - Welcome Week feedback and Exit Interviews formally collect information about College culture and help to identify any issues concerning students. Other periodic surveys also help collect this information.
- **College policies**, including the College's strong policies on sexual harassment and sexual assault, are reviewed at least annually, and published in the College Handbook and online.
 - **Face to face training** on College's values, sexual assault and harassment, consent, bystander awareness, drug and alcohol harm minimisation, mental and sexual health and cultural sensitivity training for all staff and students
 - Training on all topics is provided to and compulsory for all new and returning students and student leaders. Staff members attend training as is relevant for their roles.
 - **Strengthening training** for students and staff on the College's values, sexual assault and harassment, consent, bystander awareness, drug and alcohol harm minimisation, mental and sexual health, and cultural sensitivity.
 - Following the Action Plan for Cultural Renewal, in 2019 the College significantly expanded its student leadership and general student training programs. This expanded training, as outlined in previous reports, continues. An ongoing task is using regular gap analysis of training and feedback from students to identify any areas for improvement.
 - In 2020 the College introduced an additional pre-application student leadership training requirement for students considering applying for appointed student leadership roles (with students considering nominating for elected roles strongly encouraged to participate). This 2-day program covers a variety of leadership themes, with a particular emphasis on values-based leadership and ethical bystander behaviour, and was completed by both the 2021 and 2022 leadership teams.

- Indigenous cultural awareness and broader cultural competency have been identified as gaps in student leadership training. Recent student leadership teams have received Cultural Competency training from external provider Caleb Maru at YLab. Additionally, in 2021 and 2022 all students were asked to complete an online Indigenous cultural awareness module before arrival. In 2022 this prearrival information was expanded to include resources relating to Kaurua culture as well. The Indigenous Advisory Group has provided advice in the identification of appropriate training resources.
- In 2022 St Mark’s expanded its leadership training to include further training on sexuality and diversity, introducing a workshop titled Diversity and Inclusion in Leadership.

Summary of training provided so far for 2022 students:

- The following table provides an overview of training modules completed by 2022 students.
- Key training periods include:
 - Welcome Week orientation training for new students
 - Welcome Week training for returning students
 - Student leadership training, including:
 - Pre-application training (held in September, required to apply for appointed leadership positions, strongly encouraged for students considering nominating for elected positions – focuses on core principles of ethical and effective leadership and bystander interventions in the College context)
 - Leadership Week training (held in November/December, topics include values-driven leadership, teamwork, designing events that are purposeful and safe, risk management, supporting your peers and self-care)
 - Online summer training (compulsory modules undertaken with external providers, includes Responsible Service of Alcohol training, Working With Children Checks, first aid and Mental Health First Aid training)
 - Pre-Welcome Week training (in February immediately prior to the start of the new academic year, topics include ethical bystander behaviour, preventing and responding to sexual assault and harassment, sexual health literacy and promoting respectful relationships, responsible service of alcohol, drug and alcohol harm minimisation, diversity and inclusion, cultural competency, mental health and peer support, self care, Duty Tutor shifts and security, fire warden training, and more)
 - Welcome Back Week training (i.e. at the start of Semester 2) – training for new and returning students, typically covers extension and refresher content related to sexual health literacy, responsible behaviour around alcohol and other drugs, ethical bystander behaviour, safety, and any other needed training
 - Other training – training provided as needed

Training activity	New	Returning	Student Leaders
Staff and student leader roles and responsibilities – Welcome Week introductions	Compulsory	Completed in 2021	
Read student Handbook before arrival	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
Consent Matters – must complete before arrival	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory

"In Your Skin" sexual health literacy program by Dr Tessa Opie – first year students – Welcome Week	Compulsory	Completed in 2021	
"In Your Skin" sexual health literacy program by Dr Tessa Opie, including responding to disclosures of sexual assault – Pre-Welcome Week			Compulsory
Yarrow Place – information about sexual assault, support services for survivors of sexual assault – Welcome Week	Compulsory	Completed in 2021	
Bystander Interventions – Welcome Week new student briefing with the Dean	Compulsory		
MATE Bystander Training – pre-application training			Compulsory
Mental Health First Aid			Compulsory
Sexuality and diversity – workshops titled How to be an Ally (returning students) and Diversity & Inclusion in Leadership (student leaders)		Compulsory	Compulsory
ADES Alcohol and other drugs – harm minimisation and responsible consumption, bystander behaviour (Welcome Week – new & returning, student leaders – Pre-Welcome Week)	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
Alcohol and other drugs – Encounter Youth - Pre-application training			Compulsory
Responsible Service of Alcohol certification			Compulsory
Being Safe in the City – Sonya Karrass from Whole New World – safe nights out, drugs & alcohol – postponed to Welcome Back Week due to instructor availability	Postponed	Postponed	
Wellbeing and Support – College support services – Welcome Week briefing, wellbeing science	Compulsory	Compulsory	
Returning student briefing on values and expectations – Welcome Week arrival day briefing		Compulsory	
Cultural Competency – by Caleb Maru, YLab			Compulsory
Indigenous Cultural Awareness – online module	Strongly encouraged	Strongly encouraged	Strongly encouraged
First aid training and CPR refresher			Compulsory for key roles
Responding to students in distress – May Health – peer to peer mental health support			Compulsory
Q&A for first year students with senior students – student leaders lead discussion on behavioural expectations	Compulsory		
St Mark's Campus orientation tour	Optional		
University campus orientation tour	Optional		
North Adelaide orientation tour	Optional		
University 101 – academic support briefing for first year students	Compulsory	Completed in 2021	

Academic misconduct and referencing	Compulsory	Completed in 2021	
Fire Warden Training			Compulsory
Child Protection Training and Working With Children Check			Compulsory
Scenarios and strategies – Pre-Welcome Week workshop (focus: ethical bystander behaviour)			Compulsory
“Building Connections and Positive Culture” – Pre-Welcome Week workshop (focus: ethical bystander behaviour) – with the Director of Wellbeing			Compulsory
“Leadership and Culture” with the Director of Learning – College values in practice – Leadership Week			Compulsory
“Creating a safe and inclusive space” with the Director of Wellbeing – bystander intervention strategies, role modelling, values – Leadership Week			Compulsory
Planning events and risk management – with the Dean and Director of Learning, Leadership Week			Compulsory
“Working together as leaders” with the Dean, Leadership Week			Compulsory
“Effective Team Dynamics” with the Director of Learning, Leadership Week			Compulsory
“Playing to your strengths” with the Director of Learning – effective leadership, self-awareness, working as a team – pre-application training			Compulsory
“Supporting yourself and others” with Matthew Guidolin, Clinical Psychologist at May Health - pre-application training			Compulsory
“Leadership in Action: Scenarios and Strategies” – with the Dean and Director of Learning – Mental health; bystander intervention re: harassment; Duty Tutor concerns re: noise, drugs, smoking – pre-application training			Compulsory
“Leadership and self-care” with the Dean, Leadership Week			Compulsory
‘Responding with Compassion’ presented by Full Stop Australia. The course is designed to assist anyone who may receive disclosures of trauma, outlining a framework for how to provide a compassionate and supportive response to survivors of trauma. For staff and student leaders, May 2022			Strongly encouraged

- **Ensuring greater controls are in place for College events:**
 - The College continues to utilise the system previously introduced for approval of all events listed in the calendar of events after the College Club Committee, Dean,

Director of Wellbeing, Director of Learning and other relevant student leaders agree on the elements of each activity. Risk mitigation strategies are in place, including an event request procedure and policies.

- The event request and planning procedure and policies are reviewed annually, including in January 2022 when the new Dean conducted a thorough review of the existing procedures and has implemented appropriate improvements.
 - The COVID-19 pandemic has had a positive impact on student engagement with risk mitigation strategies and on encouraging creative thinking around different activities that are enjoyable, promote social connection and are lower risk (e.g. COVID transmission, reduction in events where alcohol is consumed, more focus in activities on community service, the environment and wellbeing).
 - As part of the event planning process, student leaders are required to identify the purpose of any event they run, and to demonstrate that this aligns with the College's values and is consistent with a culture of safety, genuine inclusion and respect for all. This topic is covered extensively in leadership training and reinforced in the event review process.
- **Alcohol Harm Minimisation and Responsible Service of Alcohol:**
 - All College events provide and promote quality non-alcoholic options (e.g. soft drinks, kombucha, water)
 - Student leaders are required to focus events on elements other than alcohol, and this must be demonstrated in the event approval process.
 - Alcohol harm minimisation is an important component of both student leadership training and general student training.
 - 2022 student leadership team training included: Responsible Service of Alcohol completed by students holding relevant roles completed online over the summer break, an ADES Alcohol and other drugs session held on 15 February 2022 that was compulsory for all student leaders regardless of role, and leadership training scenarios in pre-appointment, leadership week and pre-Welcome Week training which included situations with alcohol consumption and its misuse. Comparable training was provided to students in the 2021 leadership team.
 - 2022 new student orientation training in Welcome Week included a compulsory ADES Alcohol and other drugs session held on 21 February. Information on responsible consumption of alcohol, and the College's Alcohol Policy, is included in the student Handbook, which new students are required to read before arrival and before sitting a Handbook exam. Responsible consumption of alcohol was also explicitly addressed in the Head of College's Welcome Address at the Admission Ceremony. The ADES training and pre-arrival reading were in place for the 2021 cohort. (A new Being Safe in the City workshop was also scheduled for Welcome Week 2022 but was postponed when the presenter became unavailable).
 - Information on responsible consumption of alcohol, and the College's Alcohol Policy is included in the student Handbook, which returning students are instructed to read before arrival. The ADES training and pre-arrival reading were in place for the 2021 cohort, with the Being Safe in the City workshop (scheduled for Welcome Week but postponed due to the presenter becoming unavailable) a new addition for 2022.

- **Proactive actions to achieve a more diverse student body:**
 - In January 2020 the Registrar conducted a review of student origins over the period 2010-2019. This highlighted the schools and communities where student originate and priority areas for recruitment. From this, the College has identified international students, Indigenous students and Adelaide metropolitan students as priority populations for expanded recruitment. Efforts to recruit international students were disrupted by the pandemic, but activities towards Indigenous students have progressed with guidance from the Indigenous Advisory Group, and Adelaide metropolitan enrolments have improved.
 - Educating our students and staff about diversity and inclusion, for example with new training workshops on diverse sexualities run by our Dean for the 2022 student leadership team, mentoring for student leaders around supporting peers with autism, cultural competency training, and mental health first aid training.
 - Student-initiated activities increasingly celebrate the diversity of our community, which makes for a more welcoming and genuinely inclusive environment for our current students. These activities are also promoted through our social media channels, to send a clear message to our broader community and prospective students about our values as a community.
 - The student Charitable Foundation Committee and College Club Equity Officers regularly organise activities that celebrate the LGBTIQ+ community, to show support for students and staff who are members of these communities and to raise money for related causes. For example, coffee club fundraising morning teas for Wear It Purple Day are well-attended and a standard part of the College calendar. Students and staff mark IDAHOBIT Day each May – in 2022 this included a student-initiated chalk mural around the Pond courtyard.
 - Mental health awareness activities are a frequent theme, with students organising annual RU Ok Day events such as themed dinners and coffee club events and sharing information on their Facebook groups, themed events and participation activities like Mullets for Mental Health, which focused on men’s mental health.
 - Volunteering fortnightly at Café Outside the Square, to provide support to the local homeless community and raise awareness of social justice issues. This is one of the service activities organised by the student Charitable Foundation.
 - General fundraising activities for causes significant to them (for example, in 2021 students raised money for causes including the Zahra Foundation, Little Heroes, Rural Aid, breast cancer research, “Movember” men’s cancer research) and Multiple Sclerosis (MS) through the May 50K campaign.
 - The Indigenous Advisory Group continues to meet regularly to provide advice on how St Mark’s can better meet the needs of current and future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Important initiatives in this space include: the creation of the Indigenous Student Advisor role within the student leadership team and the active support of Indigenous students in leadership roles; the inclusion of a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony by local elders in Welcome Week activities in 2021 and 2022, and developing a culture where an Acknowledgement of Country is a standard part of all College formal events; environmental changes, such

as permanently flying the Aboriginal Flag at the front of the College and display of an Acknowledgement of Country in the Dining Hall and Ballroom; better representation of Indigenous students in marketing materials; promotion of local cultural and education opportunities to all students, such as sponsoring students to attend the annual Lowitja O'Donoghue Oration; educational activities, such as Indigenous Guest speakers (e.g. MLC Kyam Maher's 2021 Port 'n' Talk in National Reconciliation Week); internal and external social media acknowledgements of significant dates; and ongoing dialogues with students around their needs.

- **Further steps since February 2022:**

- **An independent external review:** In April 2022, the College engaged Catharine Lumby Associates to conduct an independent expert review of what St Mark's currently does and what we can do (and do better) to prevent and respond to sexual assault and other sexual misconduct. The aim of the review is to help ensure that St Mark's has policies, procedures and practices (including best practice training/education) for preventing and responding to sexual misconduct that reflect the highest possible standards. There will be an initial day of Zoom discussions with Professor Lumby and key staff in May 2022 and she will undertake in-person review activities in Adelaide in June and July 2022.
- **Full Stop Australia training, 'Responding with Compassion':** In May 2022, the College engaged Full Stop Australia to conduct a workshop for staff and student leaders on 'Responding with Compassion'. The course is designed to assist anyone who may receive disclosures of trauma, outlining a framework for how to provide a compassionate and supportive response to survivors. The workshop will also facilitate discussion regarding the barriers to reporting, and the societal and individual impact of sexual assault and domestic/ family violence.
- **Student leadership retreat – 'to be a part of the solution':** In July 2022, the College will host an offsite retreat with select student leaders. Amongst other activities, the leadership retreat will bring Professor Lumby, as a facilitator, together with key student leaders to co-design ways to promote respect and respectful relations. We think this may be one of the most important activities for upholding our values and cultural renewal at the College in 2022.
- **External consultant on sexual harassment and sexual assault:** The College will soon announce the appointment of an external consultant to whom any member of the College wishing to make a disclosure or report or seeking advice may do so, including confidentially or anonymously. This appointment is in addition to the avenues for disclosure or report within the College and externally. The consultant may assist the member of the College either in handling the matter within College, or in approaches to external agencies. The consultant would be available to advise anyone who has experienced sexual harassment or assault, or anyone who is aware of it (e.g. through witnessing it), and wishes to make a disclosure or report, or seek advice. For anyone who wishes to have such support, the external consultant would provide an alternative to raising matters within College, or going to a fully external agency (such as Yarrow Place, or SA Police), if they would rather not do those things.

Report dated 28 February 2022. (Updated 19 May 2022)