



Student orientation camps – friends for life or a nightmare introduction to university?

Elizabeth Capp, Director Students & Equity

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Organised by students for students –
developing their organisational and
leadership skills, and helping new
students transition to university

OR

An excuse for alcohol fuelled partying
and regrettable behaviour which ends
badly for too many

Key areas of concern for the University:

- Alcohol related risks – physical and behavioural
- Personal liability for student leaders
- Inclusivity and cultural sensitivity
- Attendance by U18s
- Lack of crisis response strategies



What did we do?

- Piloted a new role of paid Student Wellbeing Adviser at 5 large UG orientation camps in 2017
- Graduate students recruited through S@W
- SCP training and special briefing
- Two main purposes:
 - To support volunteer leaders to ensure success of camp for all participants
 - To provide the university with greater insight into risks and how to best manage these
- Initiative supported by faculties but strongly resisted by student organisations

What happened?

Good times for the majority but for some:

- extreme intoxication, with ambulances required in multiple instances
- a missing student
- uncomfortable behaviour from some first year males
- students being excluded/not involved in social activities
- predatory behaviour from an off duty camp site staff member



What did we learn?

- Student Wellbeing Advisers were valued ‘on the ground’ by camp leaders and participants
- While the volunteer student leaders do a great job of organising these events, additional support is worthwhile
- No subsequent complaints were received, formal or anecdotal
- Lots of ideas for improvement now being implemented for 2018



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