

***TRENDS IN THE STUDENT
ACCOMMODATION SECTOR
AND HOW IT SUPPORTS
THE STUDENT
EXPERIENCE***

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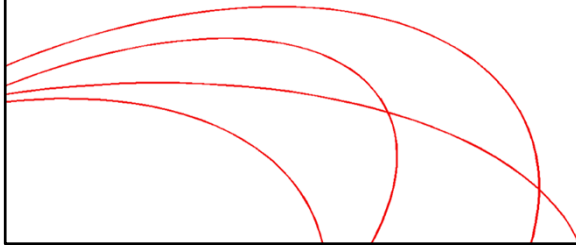
@aacuho / @melzee21



Australasian Association of College & University Housing Officers, Inc.

AACUHO:

- **Who we are**
- **How we support the student experience**
- **Trends in student housing**
- **Responses to industry needs**
- **Projects for our members**



AACUHO – WHO WE ARE



www.facebook.com/AACUHO

[@AACUHO](https://www.instagram.com/AACUHO)

www.aacuho.edu.au

- AACUHO aspires to be the premier professional organisation for all who work in Post-Secondary Education Accommodation.
- Represent professionals who work in any capacity, in Australia, New Zealand and South East Asia. So that may mean anyone from a director of an Accommodation Services department to a College Head to front of house or administrative staff.
- The core **purpose** of AACUHO is to:
 - support and facilitate quality standards of service delivery in student housing.
 - facilitate sustainability of student housing as an industry
 - advocate for the economic and pedagogical benefits as a result of standards in student housing services.
- Currently AACUHO has over 300 members across Australia, New Zealand and SE Asia.

SUPPORTING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE



- members represent over 90 University owned or affiliated halls, colleges and student residences across Australia, New Zealand and SE Asia. All of which pride themselves on providing a student experience that is engaging and supports the work of the wider University community they are linked to.

- Halls, colleges and student residences provide a critical point of engagement for rural/interstate/international students when they first arrive at University, with established orientation and arrival programmes designed to welcome new students and begin (hopefully) what will be a smooth transition to University and all it provides.

- As the year progresses additional programmes are offered to students – academic support: peer-led or professional tutoring programmes, mentoring, study skills, buddy programs.



wellbeing support: residential life staff, counsellors, student leaders, awareness & educational programmes to support resilience and wellbeing.

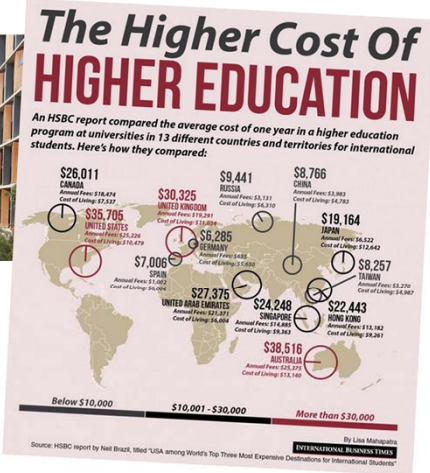
social/cultural/sporting activities: inter/intra-college competitions, arts & music, cultural awareness, charitable activities.

- Critically important, this level of support is what differentiates student housing from rental or share housing in the private sector. There is a perception that it is cheaper to live in rental accommodation, however many students do not factor in costs such as bonds, electricity, purchasing appliances, furniture, and food. In student residences, these costs are generally inclusive in the weekly rent.

- In removing these external concerns, students in halls and colleges are provided with an environment within which they have peace of mind, security and can focus on academic success.

TRENDS




Cost of HE

New building projects

National Rental Affordability Scheme

Accommodation guarantee

Commercial operators



- facing interesting times in both higher education and the student housing industry and essentially the trends in higher education impact the trends in student housing.
- Australia ranks highest when examining the average cost of one year in a higher education program.
- Student Housing plays a valuable role here in ensuring that international students are provided with meaningful engagement opportunities with other International students, but more importantly with local Australian students. Other factors like safety, transport and to some extent cost of living pressures can be alleviated by on-campus or close-to-campus student accommodation.
- For students in rural & regional areas, a move to an urban centre is not only a great challenge but a great cost.
- **However, we are in a period of growth for student accommodation.**
- According to property services firm Jones Lang LaSalle there is \$1.1 billion worth of student housing currently being planned around Australia.
- A number of Universities and affiliated colleges took advantage of the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) and as a result have been able to increase their capacity through the construction of single-occupancy studio rooms.
- Accommodation also being seen by many Universities as point of distinction in marketing to prospective students, with some institutions now offering some form of accommodation guarantee to students.
- also seeing a number of commercial operators coming into the market: UniLodge, Campus Living Villages, Urbanest, Iglu, The Pad

WHAT STUDENTS WANT...



Growth also means more choice for students. What they choose is dependent on a number of factors - the age of student, year of study, type of study and their culture / country of origin.

In the past we typically saw 1st years will prefer catered, university managed accommodation as this will allow them to focus on settling into uni, however more and more we are seeing these students also opting for self catered.

Mature-age and post graduate students tend to gravitate towards self catered.

Students generally prefer to be close to the education institution that they are attending, with good access to public transport that connects directly to the educational institution.

They also want to be in a vibrant area. They want cafes, shops, bars, social outlets

They want excellent technology, and they want WIFI.

And for those moving into student accommodation - they want their own room, own bathroom, access to everything 24/7.

On average, students tend to stay in student accommodation for 18 months to 2 years and then move out into private rental accommodation.

In terms of wellbeing for students, sourcing accommodation is highly stressful, and difficult or undesirable behaviours from landlords see students unable to perform to the best of their ability at university and also limits their capacity to connect socially and in other useful ways at University. For the most part, student-specific housing alleviates these concerns.



- This is a challenging and highly rewarding industry to work in. Staff in the student housing sector, particularly in colleges and university managed accommodation, need to have a range of skills and expertise. Some of our members live on-site at their residences and are regularly called on to provide after-hours assistance, respond to emergencies and attend community activities. Great for the student experience but not so great for work/life balance.

- However the wellbeing of students is at the core of everything they do and the impact on a student's experience in their place of study is enormous.

- Meeting a student's needs is one of the many challenges we face and typically our AACUHO members are looking for support and advice in:

Wellbeing or Pastoral care – how to support students

Managing Mental health – a massive issue and unfortunately we are all seeing a big increase in students suffering from very serious mental health illnesses

Alcohol & Drug use - also a big issue, linked to Australian drinking culture and the risk-taking behaviour present amongst 18-24 year olds.

The evolving and changing demographic of students – new cultures arriving at our Universities.

More and more our members are being called on to provide advice to students about off campus accommodation – rental, share, being alert to scams, share house disputes.

- With funding cuts comes efficiencies and our members recognise they need to be alert as to how they can make the most with what they have. They are looking at the use of space for commercial purposes, eg .out of session occupancy, conference groups, clever use of meeting rooms, catering operations.

AACUHO MEMBER SERVICES

- **Networking**
- **facebook.com/aacuho ~ twitter.com/aacuho**
- **SRMJ**
- **E-news**
- **Affiliations**
- **Benchmarking**
- **Professional standards**
- **Census**

- AACUHO focuses on providing members with information, networking and assistance to ensure they can continue to support their students and encourage engagement with their college or hall community as well as with their wider University community.

- Through our membership we are able to put people in touch with each other so that they can brainstorm ideas or seek answers to industry-specific questions. Our facebook site is an ideal place to start these conversations.

- Our members really value networking so, in addition to our annual conference, we hold small state-based member networking events and they are really well attended. - In July we held a networking/professional development day at La Trobe University which focused on best practice approaches and interventions to Drugs and alcohol on campus. This provided the opportunity for staff and students from within student accommodation to come together and discuss strategies for reducing harm and providing alternatives to alcohol at residential events.

- Through contributions to the industry journal Student Residences Management Journal, members can access case studies and industry news. This publication is printed twice a year in March and October.

- AACUHO also has a monthly e-newsletter which updates members on issues, job opportunities and upcoming events.



Through our Australian and international collaborative partnerships, AACUHO has been able to bring additional resources and expertise to our memberships. Our partnerships includes:

- UCA – University Colleges Australia - Australia
- CUBO - Association of College & University Business Officers – UK
- ACUHO-I – Association of College and University Housing Officers – International – USA
- SAC – South African Chapter – ACUHO-I – South Africa
- ASRA - Association for Student Residential Accommodation – UK
- UA – Universities Australia
- IEAA – International Education Association of Australia - Australia
- NAAUC – National Association of Australian University Colleges - Australia
- NZATEAP- New Zealand Association of Tertiary Education Accommodation Professionals – New Zealand
- CISA - Council of International Students Australia

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- In 2013 and 2014 AACUHO provided a Benchmarking tool, with great success, and we have plans to roll it out again in 2015. The result has seen participants able to benchmark themselves with other participating institutions in operational areas such as number of beds, catered and self-catered, income/expenditure, staff ratios, costs per bed, to name a few. Participants are able to access a range of reports including KPI feedback, commentary and graphs.

- We have also commenced our 2nd benchmarking project, partnering with EBI Mapworks, a US based organization. EBI surveys students directly and then analyses factors affecting student satisfaction by benchmarking aspects such as student demographics, programming, retention, learning developments. This will serve as a powerful tool for student residences to not only justify the good work that they are doing, but to provide an opportunity to learn from other institutions and “measure” their levels of student engagement.

- With UCA, AACUHO is working on a PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS project. It’s early days but will focus on best practices for student residences in post secondary education, with the goal being the development of a set of standards that can be used to improve the quality of the post-secondary student experience, and the professional management of campus housing programs.

- We are also working on a Census Project that will provide our industry with updated information on the actual number and types of student beds that exist in Australia. The census has been partially funded by the Department of Education and we are hoping the report will be released in Jan 2015.

CONFERENCE!



AACUHO
Australasian Association of College & University Housing Officers, Inc.

Sofitel Brisbane Central, Queensland, Australia
14 – 17 April 2015

2015 AACUHO
STARNET/STARREZ
CONFERENCE

Supporting Business Supporting Students

www.aacuho.epicconferences.com.au SAVE THE DATE

The banner features a background image of a city skyline with a bridge over water. Red curved lines are overlaid on the banner and extend into the white space below it.

Finally, our flagship event is our annual conference which is held each April over a 3-day period.

I'm sure you'll agree that AACUHO is well-placed to support student housing professionals in their efforts to ensure a safe, welcoming and vibrant experience for students living in their residences.