

Title - Keep it Safe: A Guide for International Women Students

Author - Kylie Smith¹,

1 RMIT Union Legal Service, 360 Swanston Street, VIC, 3000, kylie.smith@rmit.edu.au

Abstract - The presentation takes participants through the content of our newly launched website “Keep it Safe: A Guide for International Women Students” . The website content is simple and accessible and provides comprehensive, relevant information that's easy to understand and navigate, with a positive spin on safety for women.

Developed from conversations with International women students over a period of 12 months, the 9 sections together take a wholistic focus on women’s safety and women’s experiences as an international student, from eating and exercising, to nightclubbing, to sharehousing, studying, sexual harassment, race discrimination to choices about sex, and we’ve tried to be as culturally sensitive and relevant as possible.

The web information encourages women to make the most of their experience as an international student, explore the world and themselves; rather than frighten, or insight apprehension or blame. Each section includes a brief explanation, some practical advice to avoid unsafe situations, and a comprehensive contact directory for getting more support and assistance. The sections covered are:

- **Safety and You:** Making friends and staying healthy
- **Safety and Housing:** Your rights and the rights of your landlord, keeping a good relationship with housemates
- **Safety and Studying:** Sexual Harassment on campus, complaints process, assertiveness vs. rudeness
- **Safety and Work:** understanding basic workrights, sexual harassment and race discrimination at work, OHS, sexwork, visa issues
- **Safety and Getting Around:** Travelling safely in different forms of transport during the day and night
- **Safety and Nightlife/Partying:** Common party drugs, drink spiking, sexual assault
- **Safety, Dating and Relationships:** What is dating, starting a new relationship in a new country
- **Safety, Sex and the Law:** Safe sex, contraception, STI’s, pregnancy, same-sex relationships, sexual assault
- **Safety, Reporting to Police and Your Visa:** What does and doesn’t affect you visa, the role of police when reporting sexual assault

The Web address is:

www.union.rmit.edu.au/legal/keepitsafe

The workshop will be enlivening and participatory, inviting participants to share experiences, knowledge and skills in a supportive environment , providing ideas and materials to take away and develop for application to different university community’s.

Key Words

International women students and safety