

Homestay is not for everyone – An alternative model

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Reverend John Marquet highlighted the importance of creating effective pastoral care programmes for international students.

“These programmes need to recognise the real and felt needs of international students as well as address their expectations and ensure their experiences are good in terms of the whole person

- *physical,*
- *academic (intellectual),*
- *spiritual (psychological),*
- *social/emotional (socio cultural)”* – Marquet J (2003, August). *Community Views*. Paper presented at the ISANA NZ Conference, *New Zealand*.

Many institutions provide pastoral care programmes using facilities on campus in student hostels and halls. However, it is impossible for an institution to fulfil the complete needs of international students without connections in the wider community. This is especially the case with institutions like UCOL, that do not have accommodation facilities to offer students on campus.

For UCOL and similar institutions, homestays and other accommodation providers within the community play a key role in ensuring positive experiences satisfy student expectations. Homestays do not always meet these expectations. They are sometimes perceived as an expensive alternative that may not allow the student the level of independence they desire.

Hebron house is a community trust that provides a strong network of support for those in need. While based on Christian morals it is not a requisite for the tenants to share the same faith. In Palmerston North, Hebron House allows for and encourages a large proportion of independence.

Our experience is that Hebron House provides a best practice model for community accommodation and is a valuable example as an alternative to the traditional homestay experience offered to students. Our research illustrates Hebron House and how it helps meet student expectations as outlined by Rev John Marquet, in order to provide a positive experience to meet their needs as a whole person.

Key Words

Homestay
Pastoral care
Accommodation
Christian
Community