

Outsourcing Student Residence Management in Australian Universities

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Outsourcing student residence management is heavily criticised for its negative impact on international student security and engagement. Blame is frequently assigned to private housing operators and university managers who privilege financial profit over the student experience. Rejecting simple reductionism, this paper critically reviews the complex ecosystem and evolution of university student residences in Australia. It argues that poor student experience outcomes for domestic and international students result from failures in university strategy and execution rather than inherent flaws in the outsourcing process. Using evidence from the Australian National University and the University of Sydney, it goes on to show that outsourcing can go beyond minimum standards to drive best practice in residential life. This paper's insights are valuable to universities looking to expand housing capacity and university student service units looking to improve the student experience in residences. Private housing operators will also gain a better understanding of their position and competitive advantage within the sector.

Primary Key Words

Outsourcing
Student Residence
Student Experience
Student Service Units

Secondary Key Words

International Students
Australia
Private sector