

Community Safety and International Students Understanding of Australian Law

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Although international students are exposed to information on safety, they may still at times live in fear of crime, or even sometimes respond to events and their surroundings in ways that might inflame an incident without realising it; this is not the experience we would prefer them to have whilst studying. Responses like this may be due to a lack of understanding of cultural difference between Australian law and home country norms or purely an instinctive response when out of one's comfort zone.

Swinburne University will partner with the City of Boroondara during 2014 on a safety project to look at the behaviour of young people within the community. The project aims to identify safety issues that arise on and off campus, and further to develop ways to promote a culture of resilience and effective help-seeking, avoid victimisation and reduce any evident fear of crime.

This session will look at preliminary findings of the project to this point including, how international students come to understand Australian law and culture; the fear of crime and its impact on behaviour or outcomes; and interacting with local law enforcement and expectations under Australian law.

Key words

Understanding cultural difference

Safety project

Fear of crime in international students

Cultural expectations under Australian law