

Information for Prospective SHAPES Reps About the 2010 SHAPES Program – please note that applications are not called for until September of this year and are only open to current students living in on-campus accommodation.

Please read the following information about SHAPES and the training program. If you decide to undertake the training and become a SHAPES Rep please fill out and sign the application form at the end and return to your **Head of Residence**. **Please note that some colleges have their own application forms, due dates, and/or selection process. Check with your Head of Residence.**

What is SHAPES?

SHAPES stands for 'Sexual Harassment and Assault Peer Education and Support'. It is a program designed for students to deal with sexual harassment and assault issues on campus. The two day program trains a small number of selected students in the area of reducing sexual harassment and assault. A major aim of this program is to reduce sexual harassment and assault within the University.

Why run a Peer program?

Rather than the so-called 'experts' coming into the residence with information about sexual harassment and assault and educating students in these areas, the SHAPES program is based on the premise that

People are more likely to hear and personalise a message that may result in changing their attitudes and beliefs if they believe the messenger is similar to them in lifestyle and faces the same concerns and pressures.

(Sloane & Zimmer 1993: 242)

The students who complete the SHAPES program will be in a position to influence and educate their fellow students when they observe harassing and inappropriate behaviour in their residence, and on campus. Participating students are also trained to support fellow students who have been harassed or assaulted. In addition they are given information on how to refer students to appropriate services when needed.

What is in the program?

The two day program is varied and interactive. There will be information on sexual harassment and assault, group discussion, exercises and role-plays. There will be an emphasis on how participating students can tackle attitudes and behaviours that constitute harassment, for example, derogatory sexist remarks. After the initial training weekend, participants are expected to meet regularly with the Reps in their residence to provide support to each other and to plan activities to combat sexual harassment. SHAPES Reps are also required to attend further training sessions throughout the year.

Program details for 2010

Training weekend: To be confirmed. Most likely the first weekend in February (6th to 7th) (before orientation for new students). Please note that students completing SHAPES training are permitted to return to their on-campus accommodation earlier than other returning students.

Venue: To be announced.

You are free to withdraw from the training at any time, however, attendance at the entire program is compulsory. If you miss any sections of the training you will not be able to become a SHAPES Rep.

What student participants can expect from the program

- Participants can expect to gain a thorough understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- Participants will understand the serious impact harassment and assault has on a person.
- Participants will gain skills to deal with the immediate needs of a person who has been harassed or sexually assaulted.
- The skills and knowledge obtained in the training program and relevant experience as a SHAPES Rep will be valuable throughout life, for example, in the workplace environment.
- Participants will receive ongoing support and training to enable them to be effective Reps.
- Each participant completing the training program will receive a Certificate.
- Reps active in their role will be able to apply for credit points for the New England Award.

Selection criteria for students participating in the SHAPES Program

- Participating students acknowledge and accept that sexual harassment and assault issues are genuine problems on campus, that is, they do not minimise or discount the problems.
- In acknowledging the problem, students should have a strong interest and commitment to actively tackle the issues by being willing to initiate strategies to educate their peers. They need to be clear that educating their peers does not mean taking on a “policing”, notification or investigative approach.
- Participating students are generally known and popular within their residence and get on well with their peers. They are also mindful of how their own conduct among their peers may impact on how they are perceived as a SHAPES Rep. They are mindful of the need to conduct themselves in a way that maintains respect for their role as SHAPES Rep.
- Students will need to have good social skills, that is, be friendly and have an ability to be up-front with peers. Because it is a peer education program, participating students need to have

the aptitude to teach and educate their peers, both informally and formally. Skills will be taught in the program and ongoing training is provided.

- Students will need to have some good organisational skills, so they can actively participate with other SHAPES Reps to implement strategies to tackle harassment and assault issues on campus.
- Students will also need to give a time commitment, first of all to the training weekend and then to ongoing meetings. In addition, they need to give time to educate their peers informally and formally and provide time to fellow students who come to them for information and support.
- Students should not have any major unresolved issues regarding sexual harassment and assault. Students should not be perpetrators of sexual harassment and assault.

Further Information

If you would like to discuss the program further or have any questions, please contact Annette Stevenson, Student ASSIST. Telephone 6773 2897 or email asteven2@une.edu.au

Reference

Sloane, B. & Zimmer, C. 1993, 'The power of peer education', *Journal of American College Health*, vol. 41, May, pp. 241–245.

