RESPONSE FROM YEAR 12 STUDENTS AT ORBOST SECONDARY COLLEGE.

Discussion within our peer group indicates that the following are significant areas of concern to students moving from our community to undertake higher education.

**Immediate considerations**

Money is the overwhelming concern. The up front and ongoing costs of accommodation are most daunting, followed by additional costs such as books, transport etc.

CSP costs are a concern as most students from our area will not have the option of paying costs up front to receive discounts and will exit university with a substantial CSP debt.

There is the added problems of how and where to access suitable off-campus accommodation if on campus is not an option due to cost.

In moving from the country straight after completing Year 12, most students will not have accommodation references.

**Social and cultural influences include:**

Few jobs that involve continued engagement in education and training are available in our locality and this encourages students to work in established family businesses where that is an option.

Males in particular are more likely to remain in Orbost to either work in family business such as farms, or seek apprenticeships.

The VET subjects on offer at Orbost Secondary College, such as Automotive and Building, tend to encourage males to follow these career paths even when they have the ability, but often not the interest, to successfully complete higher education.

Apprenticeships in rural areas often allow students – males in particular - to work with people they feel comfortable with and in the type of work they feel comfortable with. This also means that a student who is successful in gaining an apprenticeship doesn’t need to leave home. Many students will wait in hope and if they are not successful in gaining an apprenticeship may take any other work on offer sooner than moving away to study.

Some students will exit before completing Year 12 to grasp apprenticeship opportunities which may only be available every few years.

The distance from Melbourne in particular affects students’ ability to attend Study Lectures, Open Days and other activities that stimulate the desire for both achieving to the best of their ability and going on to higher education.

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