An Invitation for Your Consideration

Welcome to your Community Services study!

As an external mode student, you will receive access to your learning resources very shortly. This will involve receiving workbooks or log-in details for our web-based courses. In addition to these learning resources, you are invited to participate in a virtual campus as part of your community services studies. This would involve creating an avatar, downloading the software to view and interact with the virtual world, participating in orientation sessions to learn how to interact in the virtual world, attending virtual classes, socialising, and participating in a range of community simulation activities.

Virtual World Preview

To assist your participation decision, you may wish to view this 2-minute video to see samples of what to expect should you wish to participate in this: https://youtu.be/2bHBl2pnhxA

Optional Participation

This virtual campus is part of a pilot program, which TAFE Queensland is exploring. Please note that this virtual participation is completely optional and you are free to accept or reject this invitation without any penalty to your study. It is offered as an additional form of support for interested students. If you choose to participate, you would also be free to cease attending the virtual world at any time.
About the Virtual World

The virtual campus is called *Sunkirsten Town*. It has two key learning areas:

1. Student learning areas to host class activities, similar to what you would experience at a real campus; and
2. Sunkirsten Town, where you can put your skills into action at the local community centre.

Sunkirsten is hosted by the Kitely virtual world. Kitely is an international open-sim virtual world created for people with many different interests, including education. So there are many virtual worlds within the Kitely virtual world (grid).

Although your virtual campus will be restricted to TAFE Queensland teachers, staff, students and invited visitors, it is wise to be aware that the public can explore many of the other virtual worlds (nick-named sims) on the Kitely world map. The Kitely arrival area is a public (international) area. Please be aware that actions and communication can be seen, heard, and possibly recorded by anyone in this public area. But once you arrive on your Sunkirsten Town Campus, you will only encounter TAFE Queensland staff, students and invited visitors.

Activities You Could Do in the Virtual World

There will be formal and informal activities available on the virtual campus. The following slides outline a few possibilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socialising</th>
<th>Class Sessions</th>
<th>Group Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Informal chatting</td>
<td>- Teacher input</td>
<td>• Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Games</td>
<td>- PowerPoint Presentations</td>
<td>• Roleplays</td>
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<td>- Fairs</td>
<td>- Handouts (in-world and external)</td>
<td>• Skill practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Exploration of the virtual campus (there are some hidden areas to find!)</td>
<td>- Question &amp; answer segments</td>
<td>• Mini simulations</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fun activities, using a range of virtual items</td>
<td>- Roleplays</td>
<td>• Study groups</td>
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**Individual Activities**

- Explore the virtual campus
- Engage with novel activities
- Explore formal asynchronous learning activities

**Simulated Activities**

- Conducting your own community exploration to create a community profile
- Identifying existing programs and designing new ones to meet community needs
- Participating in staff meetings
- Taking roles as office-bearers in meetings, including writing up minutes and distributing to members
- Participating in staff training days
- Running staff training in role
- Running groups with “clients”
- Conducting safety audits
- Writing reports
- Socialising in the staffroom
- Contributing to and/or writing policies and procedures, depending on the level of your qualification

- Researching to play a client role, based on role-cards.
- Roleplaying as a client
- Working with “clients” as a worker, exploring:
  - Your communication skills
  - Counselling skills
  - Case Management
  - Specific Issues
  - Behaviour management
- Observing colleagues roleplaying in both worker and client roles
- Reflecting on these experiences
- Researching and tailoring learning based on your emerging strengths and weaknesses.
- Responding to community emergencies
- And so on...
Professional Conduct in this Virtual World

TAFE Queensland has a number of policies that outline student and employee conduct. This is to foster the best environment for learning and working in a safe and collaborative environment. Both staff and students are expected to abide by these in online environments as well as in face-to-face learning areas. So to ensure the best learning atmosphere, there are a number of roles and responsibilities you need to take, if you choose to participate in this virtual learning experience:

Teachers agree to:

- Assist in orientating you to the virtual world by teaching you a number of virtual skills and conducting virtual campus tours.
- Provide you with a range of sessions for theory input in your virtual classroom.
- Provide you with a number of simulated activities to develop your skills in a range of virtual areas, including a community centre.
- Structure your virtual learning processes to enhance your course learning.
- Be available to debrief after simulated activities or other virtual experiences. This will happen immediately after class activities. (For anything outside of formal session hours, you will need to book a time, as soon as possible with your teacher).
- Work within their professional codes of ethics and conduct.
- Seek feedback from you, periodically, on what is working well and what isn’t; as well as any new ideas you may have for the campus and virtual learning experience.
- Monitor, moderate and respond to feedback, questions and concerns by participants, including any controversial content.

Students you agree to:

- Use your own computer to access the virtual world.
- Use your own internet connection and monitor and pay for this usage as you would normally with your internet service provider.
- Ensure that you have your internet security up-to-date and take responsibility for maintaining this.
- When creating an avatar, use your real first name (or slight variation), but a false surname. You could use a shared surname if you wish. E.g: Stufate.
- Inform your teacher of your avatar’s name (first name and surname).
- Give permission for your avatar’s name to be placed on a class list, so that the group will know who their fellow avatars are and what course levels they are studying. Your real surnames will not be placed on this list. The list will be sent to participants externally, by email.
- Not disclose any of your personal information to strangers in-world; and use prudence with your classmates as well (the same as real life).
- Not disclose any personal/other information about others (teachers, students or anyone else) to third parties (in-world or in real life). This includes the avatar list. Please redirect enquiries by saying “Contact your teacher” without any more contact information provided.
- Dress your avatar professionally at all times, as you are in a professional learning environment.
- Act according to the TAFE Queensland rules and the Australian Community Workers Association (ACWA) Code of Ethics.
- Not share usage of your avatar with anyone.
- Not disclose your avatar’s password to anyone.
• Treat all participants with respect, acting responsibly as a professional, especially in the case of disagreements or conflict.

• Report any concerns or issues to your teacher, as soon as possible, via email (24/7) or phone (office hours). Your teacher will respond as soon as possible.

• Respect copyright and the moral rights of others, acknowledging that any views expressed in the virtual world do not imply TAFE Queensland endorsement.

Because your virtual world has restricted access, it is not expected that there will be issues with strangers on your virtual campus, but it is important to be alert and responsible. Privacy, confidentiality and safety are very relevant to community service workers; so it is good practice, not only for your virtual experience, but for the real Community Services industry. This agreement will contribute to fostering a positive learning experience.

As well as attending formal classes, students are welcome to explore their campus sims and use these for study groups and informal gatherings, as they would on a real campus.

Social Media Usage

Participants may wish to post photos and reflections on social media. This needs to respect the privacy and confidentiality of others.

TAFE Queensland Staff

TAFE Queensland Staff refers to teachers, researchers, administration staff, student support officers and the occasional invited guests.

At times TAFE Queensland staff may wish to video some of the virtual activities. This will be done maintaining participant anonymity. Participants will be informed when videoing is being conducted and for what purpose. In the event of the video being addressed with participant names or voices, this will always be done with participant awareness and only with their permission. In such events, formal written permission paperwork will be addressed in the same way as with real person-to-person media coverage.

Students

Students are welcome to take in-world photos and to post these on social media with comments, if they so wish. However, this must be done respecting the privacy of others. Please ensure that you do not identify any other avatar name or real-life name in this, apart from your own. You are required to behave professionally at all times, abiding within the TAFE Queensland Student rules the Australian Community Workers Code of Ethics.

Any bullying or defamation would have serious consequences and may result in exclusion from the virtual campus and possibly even from the qualification. It is important that you act professionally both as a student and as a Community Services worker in training. Please contact your teacher should you have any concerns regarding this conduct.

Please also be aware that different cultures have different practices about photos and other activities. You will learn about these in your study. So please be respectful of these practices and consult your teacher if you are unsure.
Agreement

I AGREE to respect and work within this Virtual Campus - General Participation Agreement.

I understand that breaching this agreement may result in my exclusion from the virtual campus as well potentially compromise my continuation in my TAFE Queensland study/work.

Participant’s Name:__________________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________________________

Role: I am a (please circle) TAFE STUDENT  INVITED VISITOR  TAFE EMPLOYEE

OTHER (Please Specify)

Date: _____ / ______ / ______

Parent/Guardian (If participant is under 18 years of age)

Name:________________________________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________________________

Date: _____ / _____ / ______

If you have signed this document, welcome aboard! We look forward to working with you very soon.

Additional Research Activity

TAFE Queensland is also looking for virtual campus participants who would be interested in participating in a research project. Feedback would be anonymous and would assist TAFE Queensland in evaluating the effectiveness of the virtual learning experiences. This would involve participating in everything described above, but you would also be asked to address some short surveys.

Please note that this research is an optional extra to the virtual campus. You can still participate fully in the virtual campus without being a part of this research.

Please indicate your interest regarding this research:

☐ No thanks. I am not interested in this additional research activity.

☐ Yes, I am interested in this additional research activity. Please send me more information to assist my decision. Email address contact is:

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