

Residential Camp 2026

RESIDENTIAL CAMP 2026

ORMOND COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

19–21 JANUARY 2026

Residential Camp 2026 took place from 19–21 January at Ormond College, University of Melbourne, bringing together Skyline students for three days of learning, connection, and reflection. This year, 121 Skyliners attended across our Year 11 and Year 12 cohorts.

Hosted in a residential university setting, the camp offered students a genuine insight into tertiary life. Staying in dormitory accommodation, learning in lecture rooms, and sharing meals in the dining hall allowed students to step into an environment that many had not previously experienced. For many, this reinforced a powerful message at the heart of Skyline's work: university is not out of reach, and they belong here.

The camp was intentionally structured to support students at different stages of their Skyline journey, while also building a strong shared community. Year 11 students commenced the program on Monday, focusing on transition, identity, and connection, before staying overnight on campus. On Tuesday, Year 12 students joined for a full day of shared learning and activities, before staying overnight. Wednesday was dedicated to Year 12 students, with a future-focused program supporting aspiration, direction, and life beyond school.



WHO AM I?

YEAR 11 IDENTITY, BELONGING AND CONFIDENCE

For Year 11 students, Residential Camp marked the beginning of their Skyline journey. Their program focused on the theme Who am I?, supporting students to explore identity, confidence, and connection. Workshops and mentor-led discussions created space for reflection and encouraged students to step outside their comfort zones in a supportive environment.

Across the day, students participated in a series of interactive sessions designed to build self-awareness and strengthen peer connection. Zoe from Alkimia Learning led the opening workshop, Better Together, helping students establish a strong foundation of trust and community. Kristy then guided students through Ikigai: Crafting Your Main Character Moment, supporting students to reflect on what motivates them and what matters most. The day concluded with LEGO Serious Play, facilitated by Ian Grimwood, where students explored identity and teamwork through hands-on creative problem solving.

Students frequently spoke about the impact of being surrounded by peers with similar experiences. One student reflected on the joys of *“meeting new people, sleeping at an actual university and using their facilities,”* while another shared that the most valuable part was *“making new friends and understanding who I am as a person.”*

Confidence-building emerged as a strong theme in Year 11 feedback. For some students, this was a noticeable shift over just a few days.

“The most valuable part was my group mentor. He helped a lot with gaining my confidence and helped me with speaking up in the group...Where on the first day I probably said less than 20 words.”



“The best part of residential was looking toward my future and meeting others in the same position as me, which definitely makes me feel more included and involved.”

TOGETHER IN COMMUNITY

Tuesday marked a shift in energy as Year 12 students arrived and the full Skyline cohort came together. With both year levels learning side by side, the day strengthened cross year connections and reinforced a shared sense of community.

The program featured targeted workshops led by Skyline Program Managers, alongside Skyline Hatch sessions delivered by alumni who have recently completed VCE.

Year 11 students focused on building strong study foundations. Their Hatch session covered practical study strategies, effective revision planning, and how to use Skyline Hatch as a consistent academic resource across the year, not just during exams.

Year 12 students took a strategic focus, exploring how to maximise Hatch in the lead up to exams. This included prioritising subjects, using revision lectures effectively, refining exam technique, and asking detailed questions of alumni presenters. The peer perspective added credibility and reassurance at a pivotal stage of their final year.

At lunchtime, the Partners in Possibility Expo connected students with organisations including Enquiring Minds, Edrolo, ForHealth, Fraser's Medical, HEX, Larita Academy, Lander and Rogers, and ValueLab, alongside tertiary representatives from St Hilda's College, Janet Clarke Hall, Queen's College, Ormond College, Newman College and the University of Melbourne.

For many students, the Expo brought future pathways to life. One Year 12 shared, *"The best part of Residential Camp was asking questions about college and learning about networking. I didn't know college was even a possibility because it's not talked about at my school."*

Students across both year levels also valued the peer connection. As one reflected, *"I really enjoyed spending time with like-minded people and realising common experiences among students at different schools."*

A highlight of the afternoon was a joint scavenger hunt across the university campus. Mixed teams of Year 11 and Year 12 students navigated key landmarks, completed challenges, and worked together to solve clues. The activity added a sense of fun and friendly competition, while also building confidence in navigating a tertiary environment that can initially feel unfamiliar.



LEARNING FROM THOSE WHO'VE BEEN THERE

THE ROLE OF ALUMNI MENTORS

Alumni mentors were a constant presence throughout Residential Camp 2026, supporting students across sessions, meals, and informal moments. Twenty-five Skyline alumni, representing the past five years of the program, returned to share their experiences and support the next generation.

As recent graduates of the Skyline journey, these mentors brought relatability and perspective. Seeing people with shared lived experiences who have progressed beyond school and into further study and work helps students recognise what is possible for themselves. One student shared that the mentors *“made Skyline feel welcoming and friendly,”* reinforcing the sense of safety and belonging that underpinned the camp.

The openness of alumni helped students feel comfortable asking questions, sharing concerns, and imagining what life beyond school might look like. For many, it was *“comforting and encouraging to see who I could be in the future through the mentors here,”* particularly for students who may not otherwise have access to role models who reflect their own experiences.



WHO DO I WANT TO BE?

YEAR 12 ASPIRATION, DIRECTION AND LIFE BEYOND SCHOOL

The final day of Residential Camp focused on Year 12 students and the theme Who do I want to be? As students prepare for their final year of school, sessions encouraged reflection on purpose, identity, and future direction.

Year 12 students began their camp experience with More Than a Score, led by the Skyline Program team, which set the tone for the day by reinforcing that success is not defined by a single number.

Wednesday's program brought together a diverse group of facilitators who guided students to think deeply about leadership, values, and life beyond school. The day opened with a future-focused workshop led by Jess and Purvang at HEX, building confidence and encouraging big-picture thinking. Students then engaged in a powerful session with Ada of Asialink, which resonated strongly. As one student shared, *"The best part for me was Ada's workshop. The presentation was very impactful."*

The program concluded with a reflective workshop led by Shiung at ValueLab, inviting students to consider their purpose, their influence, and the role they want to play in shaping their future. Several students spoke about the impact of sessions that challenged their thinking and encouraged deeper reflection. One student shared, *"I liked the final session with ValueLab talking about power. It was very insightful and really made me question everything I've been taught before."*





OUTCOMES

Across both cohorts, student feedback consistently highlighted the impact of Residential Camp 2026 on confidence, belonging, and aspiration. Students reported feeling supported, connected, and more able to imagine themselves at tertiary level and beyond.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

121

Students attended*

97%

Felt more positive about their future

97%

Felt more connected to the Skyline community

93%

Built new student connections

82%

Reported increased confidence

Student reflections reinforced these outcomes. One student reflected on the importance of peer connection, sharing *“the real highlight was meeting like-minded peers and getting to know them on a deeper level, along with all the laughs we shared during Residential Camp.”*

Another spoke about the confidence gained through new relationships, noting *“meeting new people and gaining that confidence, whether it was friends, Program Managers, or other connections with partners.”*

* Due to the ongoing Victorian bushfires, transport for students from the North East region was not deemed safe, with major roads closed at the time of Camp. As a result, nine students were unable to attend the camp as planned. Skyline Program Managers are coordinating a dedicated visit to the region to deliver a tailored session for these students, ensuring they are still able to access key program content, connection, and support.





THANK YOU

Residential Camp 2026 demonstrated the power of immersive, community-driven experiences in shaping student confidence and aspiration. The combination of a residential university setting, purposeful program design, and strong alumni involvement ensured the camp remained a defining experience within the Skyline pathway.

As Skyline continues to grow, Residential Camp will remain a cornerstone of the program, helping students not only imagine their future, but begin to see themselves living it. This experience was made possible through the collective support of our facilitators, alumni, staff, volunteers, partners, and transport providers. We are grateful to everyone who contributed their time, energy, and support to ensure students could participate fully and safely, and to be part of a community that believes in their potential.

“Thanks for putting on an amazing residential. I have never been more grateful for the effort I’ve put in at school, if it can lead to things like this.” – Year 11 student 2026

