

BEING, BELONGING, BECOMING. SEPTEMBER MASTERCLASS WRAP-UP



📍 DEAKIN UNIVERSITY | TUESDAY 29 SEPT 2026



“From my 2 years going to Masterclass this would be my top one!”
-Year 12 student

The day received an average overall experience rating of **8.8/10**, with students responding particularly strongly to opportunities to connect, participate and develop practical strategies they could put into action straight away.

On Tuesday 29 September, Skyline students came together at Deakin University’s Burwood campus for our final Masterclass of the year! A day centred on future pathways, practical wellbeing, connection and the skills students will carry with them beyond school.

Students explored university life alongside current Deakin students, challenged their digital habits, and took part in interactive workshops designed to strengthen communication, teamwork, leadership and problem solving.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

- 89%** connected with like-minded peers
- 85%** gained skills for school & life
- 85%** felt encouraged to think positively





EXPLORING WHAT COMES NEXT



The day began with Deakin University, giving students the opportunity to hear directly from current university students and start thinking about what their own pathway beyond Year 12 could look like.

Following an introductory student panel, students broke into six smaller groups for Map Your Future, exploring university life, different pathways into tertiary education and the options available to them after school.

Students then headed across the Burwood campus with current Deakin students and Skyline mentors for Uni Myths Busted. The tours created space for honest conversations about university, including entry and alternative pathways, accessibility, affordability, available support and what student life is actually like.

For many students, the experience helped make university and life beyond school feel more tangible and achievable

“The future isn’t as scary as it seems.” - Year 11 student

By the end of the day, 85% of students agreed the Masterclass had helped them think about their future in a positive way.

CTRL YOUR SCROLL



TAKING BACK CONTROL OF DIGITAL HABITS LIFE SKILLS THAT STICK

CTRL Your Scroll joined us to deliver an engaging and practical session exploring students' relationships with their phones and social media. It was the highest rated structured session of the Masterclass, with 83% of students agreeing it was useful.



The session encouraged students to take a closer look at their relationship with their phones and social media, particularly the impact excessive screen time can have on sleep, study habits and wellbeing. Rather than simply telling students to spend less time online, the focus was on recognising their own digital habits and identifying practical, realistic changes they could make.

Student feedback showed those messages translated into clear intentions to change behaviour. Students spoke about removing phones from their bedrooms while sleeping, keeping devices away while studying, reducing screen time and becoming more conscious of doomscrolling, particularly as exams approached.

"I'm going to not have my phone in my room anymore! This was my favourite session" - Year 12 student

"As a result of this session, I realised how truly damaging excessive social media use can be. It made me want to take action and limit my use of devices, especially before bed and whilst studying, by removing them from my space." - Year 11 student

Others planned to ***"reduce screen time, especially as exams come closer"***, while one Year 11 student reflected, ***"I'm aware of my doomscrolling and I have things in place to stop it now"***.



CONNECTION THROUGH PARTICIPATION



The afternoon shifted the focus to teamwork, leadership and connection, with students participating in one of three Skyline sessions: Challenge Accepted with Gaynor, Beyond Small Talk with Martha and Roll for Initiative with Zoe.

Each took a very different approach, but shared the same goal: getting students actively involved, working with others and building skills through participation.



“I liked the Challenge Accepted workshop, working together and getting to know others. It was really nice to connect and talk with other students.” - Year 12 student

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

Led by Lead Program Manager, Gaynor, Challenge Accepted took students out of the classroom and onto the basketball courts for an active teamwork session.

Through physical and group-based challenges, students had the opportunity to work together, communicate and draw on one another’s strengths. The session gave students space to move, have fun and connect with peers in a completely different environment to the academic sessions earlier in the day.

It was part of a broader afternoon designed to give students more opportunities to participate and collaborate, strengthening relationships across the Skyline community while developing the teamwork and leadership skills they will draw on at school and beyond.

BEYOND THE SMALL TALK

Led by Program Manager, Martha, Beyond Small Talk was exactly what it sounds like: an opportunity to get past the usual introductions and genuinely get to know other Skyliners.

Students rotated through different partners, learning about one another through conversations covering interests, family, personality, favourite things and even the “*pros and cons of friending me.*”

Rather than creating their own profile, each student contributed to their partner’s poster, encouraging them to listen closely, ask questions and take a genuine interest in the person opposite them.

The activity gradually moved beyond the easy introductory questions into conversations about personal characteristics and relationships, creating a relaxed and supportive environment for students to share as much or as little as they felt comfortable with.

“Beyond small talk was really fun and I liked getting to meet and talk to different people throughout the day.” -Year 11 student

ROLL FOR INITIATIVE



Over in Roll for Initiative, Program Manager Zoe took a very different approach to exploring teamwork, initiative and students' individual strengths, with a workshop inspired by Dungeons & Dragons.

Students created their own character profile, identifying skills they felt highly proficient in, those they were currently developing and areas they wanted to strengthen. These included leadership, teamwork, communication, active listening, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, initiative, resilience and empathy.

They also considered their own “main quest”, current objectives and the smaller steps that could help them get there, before exploring how different strengths and abilities can translate into future study and careers.

With their characters created, it was time to put those skills to the test!



Working in small groups, students were thrown into fictional challenges requiring some very real skills. There were dragons with planning complaints, royal wedding disasters, escaped unicorns, magical portals, increasingly confident ceremonial geese and, naturally, a floor that was actually lava.

Behind the chaos were challenges in communication, negotiation, prioritisation, teamwork, critical thinking, adaptability, recognising individual strengths and problem solving under pressure.

Students had to decide who would lead, divide responsibilities, listen to different perspectives and work together on a solution, with the roll of a dice occasionally throwing another obstacle into the mix.

83% of students who participated in Roll for Initiative agreed the session was useful.

“I really enjoyed being able to collaborate with new peers and create a story which created an engaging and fun activity to work on together.” – Year 11 student



BUILDING A STRONGER SKYLINE COMMUNITY

While each session had a different focus, one theme ran throughout the day: **connection**.

Students had opportunities to meet people from different schools, work alongside Skyliners they did not already know, spend time with their mentors and build relationships across the broader Skyline community.

By the end of the Masterclass, 89% of students agreed they had opportunities to connect with like-minded peers.



“LOVED THE POSSIBILITY TO CONNECT WITH OTHER PEERS TODAY, THROUGH THE TIME PROVIDED AND THE ACTIVITIES THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE.” - YEAR 11 STUDENT

The strength of the response was also clear in the students’ open feedback. Without being asked to compare the event with previous Masterclasses, students independently described the day as their best or top Masterclass.

“Best Masterclass so far!! Really practical and fun, great way to empower students and encourage spiritual wellbeing.” - Year 11 student



THANK YOU

Masterclasses like this are only possible because of the generosity of our donors and partners. Your support enables us to bring Skyline students together from across Victoria and provide experiences that build their skills, expand their networks and give them greater confidence in what comes next.

From experiencing a university campus and exploring future pathways, to developing practical wellbeing strategies and building meaningful connections with other Skyliners, your support makes these opportunities possible.

We would also like to thank Deakin University, our facilitators and mentors for helping deliver the day, and our transport partners for ensuring students from across metropolitan and regional Victoria could be there.

With 85% of students gaining useful knowledge, strategies or skills, 85% thinking more positively about their future and 89% strengthening connections with like minded peers, the impact of your support extends well beyond a single day.

Thank you for investing in our students and making opportunities like the September Masterclass possible.



"PLEASE MORE LIKE THIS ONE, IT WAS SO FUN. This was the best masterclass yet."
- Year 11 student

