

**University of Melbourne  
Respect Taskforce  
Meeting 1/2017**

A meeting was held from 3.30 pm to 5:00 pm, Wednesday 23 August 2017  
Level 7 Meeting Room, Raymond Priestley Building

**Members present:** Richard James (Chair), Paul Duldig, Elizabeth Capp, Daniel Persaud, Amanda Davis, Jenny Morgan, Georgina Sutherland, Hannah Billett, Max Bergh, Damian Powell, Joseph McCarthy, Zhi Xuan (John) Hee

**Apologies:** Cathy Humphreys, Sally Eastoe, Erin Dale

**Minutes:** Celia Scott

**CONFIRMED MINUTES**

**A. Formal Matters**

**A1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed the Taskforce to the first meeting.

It was noted that the membership of the taskforce has been expanded to include a representative of UMSU International.

It was also noted that Jenny Morgan will be asked to continue on the Taskforce as a subject matter expert when she is no longer the Dean of Law.

**B. Items for Discussion**

**B1. Discussion re role the Taskforce and the terms of reference**

It was agreed that the Respect Taskforce is a strategic rather than operational committee. The Taskforce will be responsible for defining and prioritising the goals of the University. Specific actions to achieve these goals will then be undertaken by the relevant specialist areas of the University community. If required, the Taskforce may establish working groups with a wider membership on specific issues or work with existing groups (for example, a group from the Academic Women in Leadership professional development program have chosen to investigate bystander interventions, and will present their findings and recommendations on November 1, 2017). The Taskforce will develop an accessible and transparent articulation of its goals and actions, to be shared with both the University community and the general public. Membership of the Taskforce, the terms of reference and the minutes will also be published.

Separately to the Taskforce but aligned with its work, Richard James will work directly with a student reference group for wider student input and as a mechanism for communication with students. This reference group will include the three student representatives on the Taskforce.

In order to maximise the effectiveness of the Taskforce, the following principles were proposed:

- Membership is as a personal representative, so proxies are not desirable except under exceptional circumstances (once the Taskforce is established this principle will be revisited to consider whether flexibility is needed)
- The need for members to be frank and honest. This means creating a space where we are willing to both voice and hear unorthodox opinions and ideas.

- Respect for past and present efforts in the area. The dedicated work undertaken in the past has laid the groundwork for the future work.
- Resist external pressures to set the University's response agenda, for the Taskforce is best placed to assess the specific needs of the University community.
- A whole of community focus that includes students and staff.
- Media requests should be discussed with Erin Dale. The University's position is that only the VC and the Provost speak officially on this topic.

*Action: investigate the best way to communicate/publicise the role and activities of the taskforce*

## **B2. Review of the context**

There was broad discussion of the AHRC survey and the media response to this. It was agreed that while there were flaws in the methodology and implementation of the survey, this is still the best data that we have available on this issue. Unfortunately, conflation by the media of the survey and sample results have muddled some understanding of the results.

At an institutional level the survey results were of specific diagnostic value in highlighting the issues for Victorian universities surrounding public transport and the lack of awareness of avenues for support and reporting among our own students.

The qualitative information allowed the AHRC to identify four major contributing factors to sexual assault and sexual harassment across Australian universities:

- Lack of respect (particularly towards women and LGBTIQA people)
- Alcohol
- Perpetrators abusing positions of power
- Prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault in residential settings

Following the release of the survey results there has been a very slight upswing in the reporting of assault and harassment (Safer Community, UMSU). This trend may grow slowly over time as people gain confidence in the reporting process, or in determining how they wish to respond. A number of former students have made contact to express support for the University (and to advise that they had no problems during their student days). A small number of alumni expressed concerns as the communications surround the survey release caused old memories to resurface.

UMSU, UMSU international and the GSA are all planning further work in the space, including their own recommendations, working groups and including questions about sexual assault and harassment on surveys.

It was noted that presentations at a senior level (such as Academic Board) had been an effective means of creating 'buy in' and interest. It was also noted, however, that there had been a feeling amongst some front facing staff that the communications had been 'cold' and too focussed on practical responses rather than expressing care for the staff themselves.

It was also noted that the 'where to go for help' diagram was extremely useful, and provided clear effective advice.

### **B3. Discussion of priorities and foci**

It is essential that the Taskforce is clear about what it is trying to achieve. Given the depth and breadth of the terrain of both prevention and response, it is important that the Taskforce determines the priority areas to target – those areas which are most in need and those where we can have the greatest impact. To assist in this, four (potentially overlapping) areas have been identified (raising awareness, training, improving support and response), with three enablers (policies and procedures; data and reporting; partnerships). The AHRC report has also provided a number of focus areas for improvement or change (refer to concept map for details). It was suggested that it might also be useful to divide the areas for development into two categories – primary prevention and response.

Other areas which should also be kept in mind are: orientation; mental health and wellbeing; external partners (in particular external supervisors and internship placements); under 18s (ministerial order 870); visitors (including semi-permanent such as Trinity Foundation students); realigning thinking so that staff and students consider the University community ‘us’ rather than ‘them’.

More generally it was agreed that that one of the first issues to work on is the lack of awareness of both available support and what happens when a complaint is made. It is worth acknowledging, prior to developing a clear process map, that not all aspects of this will satisfy all people, but that the principles of natural justice for alleged perpetrators must still be upheld.

*Action: Start review of policy and process (Chancellery)*

*Action: Determine the University approach to working with children checks (Legal and Risk)*

### **C. Future meetings**

Ideally the committee will meet twice more the near future (tentatively mid- and late- September) after which a regular meeting time will be established.

Four primary action areas							
Raising Unimelb community awareness		Improving training		Improving response		Improving support	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increasing visibility of the issues</li><li>Values campaigns</li><li>Ongoing/maintenance activities</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>For students and staff</li><li>Types: consent, first responder, bystander, alcohol and drugs etc.</li><li>Format: online/face to face, optional/mandatory</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improving understanding of procedures and processes</li><li>Achieving best practice in complaint management</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improving awareness of available support</li><li>Improving knowledge of reporting options and processes</li></ul>	
Enablers							
Reviewing/renewing policies and procedures		Reporting and data			Partnerships		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review of policies, procedures, student charter and related statements and documents</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Transparent and accessible communication</li><li>Best practice data capture and analysis</li><li>Audits and evaluation</li><li>Transparent and effective communication and sharing with internal stakeholder</li><li>Utilisation of internal experts</li></ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Maintain and develop partnerships of mutual benefit to maximise use of expertise and minimise unnecessary duplication</li><li>Universities Australia, Go8, VVCC</li><li>Police, PTV</li><li>External agencies</li></ul>		
Particular Focus Points (from <i>Change the Course</i> )							
Alcohol	Residences	Public transport	Online	RHD supervision	Special Consideration	Sport	Clubs

## Table of Contents

Summary of recommendations .....	3
Recommendations extracted from key reports.....	5
Australian Human Rights Commission: Change the Course .....	5
Summary .....	5
Action Areas .....	5
Recommendations .....	5
Australian Human Rights Centre. On Safe Ground .....	9
Foundational principles: .....	9
Enabling themes:.....	9
Systemic recommendations.....	9
University sexual assault and harassment policies and procedures.....	10
Student support services .....	11
Prevention strategies .....	12
Universities Australia: 10-Point Action Plan .....	13
Awareness and Prevention .....	13
Improving Support .....	13
Reviewing Progress .....	14
Colleges and Residential Halls.....	14
Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations .....	15
Recommendations: prior to survey release.....	15
Recommendations: Short term (within 6 months).....	15
Recommendations: Medium term (6 months – 2 years).....	15
Recommendations: Long term (2 years – 5 years) .....	15
End Rape on Campus: Connecting the Dots .....	15
Implement evidence - based education campaigns .....	15
Provide training for staff and student leaders on responding to disclosures of sexual assault and harassment .....	16
Improve support services for survivors .....	16
Create and implement policies and procedures that are survivor - centric. ....	16
Maintain effective records.....	19
Improve oversight of student residences .....	20
Changing the Culture: Report of the Universities UK Taskforce .....	20
Senior leadership .....	20
Institution wide approach.....	20

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

Prevention.....	20
Response .....	21
Managing situations where students have committed a disciplinary offence which may also constitute a criminal offence .....	21
Sharing good practice .....	21
Online Harassment.....	21
White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault .....	22
Coordinated Campus and Community Response .....	22
Prevention and Education.....	23
Policy Development and Implementation .....	24
Reporting Options, Advocacy, and Support Services.....	24
Climate Surveys, Performance Measurement, and Evaluation .....	25
Transparency.....	26

## Summary of recommendations

The table below consolidates the recommendations from a number of recent reports about sexual assault and sexual harassment in Higher Education, using the five AHRC Action Area categories, plus Support Services. There is some overlap between these categories. All the recommendations should be guided by the general principles of transparency, equity and accessibility.

Action Areas	Recommendations
Leadership and Governance	<p><i>The need for a strong and visible commitment to action from university leaders, accompanied by clear and transparent implementation of these recommendations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vice-Chancellors' should have an advisory body to guide all of the recommendations below. This should include relevant representation from across the University community.</li> <li>• Regular reviews of policies and procedures, and codes of conduct.</li> <li>• Embed a zero tolerance approach to sexual assault and harassment across all institutional activities.</li> <li>• Involve student unions in developing, maintaining and reviewing the institution wide approach.</li> <li>• Share information regularly across the University community.</li> <li>• Develop an Australia-wide network for facilitating the exchange of good practice.</li> </ul>
Educational and Behavioural	<p><i>Development of measures aimed at preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training / communications for staff and students about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ behaviours that constitute sexual assault and sexual harassment</li> <li>○ consent and respectful relationships</li> <li>○ 'violence supportive attitudes' and bystander intervention</li> <li>○ first responders.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ongoing communication campaigns to reinforce key messages.</li> <li>• Review policies and practices relating to alcohol.</li> <li>• Provide clear principles guiding interactions between supervisors and research students.</li> <li>• Ensure information and advice does not victim blame or perpetuate myths.</li> </ul>
University Response and Reporting	<p><i>Implementation of effective processes for responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear and accessible information about: reporting avenues (staff and students); different options for reporting; internal and external processes; complaints and reporting process; possible outcomes (clearly defined remedies including interim measures and range of sanctions).</li> <li>• Make all of the above available in different languages and formats, and actively promote to minority or at risk groups.</li> <li>• Collect detailed information about all reported complaints, included response, time lines and support provided. This should be monitored to assess trends or concerns.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that policies are implemented in a prompt, consistent and equitable fashion that affords the same opportunities to all parties so that all parties (complainants, respondents, bystanders etc.) can have faith in the process and resolution.</li> <li>• Consider offering an anonymous online reporting option.</li> </ul>
<b>Support Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that support services consider the needs of a diverse population.</li> <li>• Provide clear and accessible information about support services (again in multiple languages and formats, and promoted to at risk groups).</li> <li>• Develop relationships with external services for referral.</li> <li>• Regularly audit support services for effectiveness.</li> <li>• Provide holistic support for victims who are reporting (rather than their being required to repeat their story at multiple service points).</li> <li>• Include staff with specialist training in responding to sexual assault</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<p><i>Ensuring that steps taken to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment are evidence-based and that improvements to prevention and response mechanisms are made over time.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage an independent body to undertake national survey at three-yearly intervals.</li> <li>• Undertake an independent external review of policies and processes.</li> <li>• Keep accurate and timely statistics.</li> <li>• Regularly evaluate the implementation of all actions for effectiveness.</li> </ul>
<b>Residential Accommodation</b>	<p><i>Specific steps to improve the culture within residential colleges and university residences, with a particular focus on risk management.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage an independent body to undertake review.</li> <li>• Review the legislative framework to ensure that colleges fall within the scope of university sexual assault and harassment policies.</li> <li>• Ensure availability of alternative accommodation to enable expeditious change in living arrangements.</li> <li>• Work with private accommodation providers to be consistent with University policies and procedures</li> </ul>



## Recommendations extracted from key reports

### Australian Human Rights Commission: [Change the Course](#)<sup>1</sup>

#### Summary:

The case for addressing sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities students is compelling. Swift and decisive action is required by universities to deal with the challenges that currently exist and to ensure that future students are guaranteed a learning environment that is safe and promotes their wellbeing.

The Commission has made a total of nine recommendations, eight of which are directed at universities and one of which is aimed at residential colleges and university residences. These recommendations focus on five areas of action:

#### Action Areas

**Leadership and governance:** The need for a strong and visible commitment to action from university leaders, accompanied by clear and transparent implementation of these recommendations.

**Changing attitudes and behaviours:** Development of measures aimed at preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment.

**University responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment:** Implementation of effective processes for responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** Ensuring that steps taken to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment are evidence-based and that improvements to prevention and response mechanisms are made over time.

**Residential colleges and university residences:** Specific steps to improve the culture within residential colleges and university residences, with a particular focus on risk management.

#### Recommendations

##### *Recommendation 1*

Vice-Chancellors should take direct responsibility for the implementation of these recommendations, including decision-making and monitoring and evaluation of actions taken.

To assist and advise them in this respect, Vice-Chancellors should have an advisory body within their institution which has responsibility for guiding the implementation of the recommendations made in this report.

The advisory body should report directly to the Vice-Chancellor of each university and include representatives from:

- the university's senior leadership
- the student body
- academic staff
- residential colleges affiliated with the university
- student services, such as: counselling services, medical services and campus security, and

---

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/AHRC\\_2017\\_ChangeTheCourse\\_UniversityReport.pdf](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/AHRC_2017_ChangeTheCourse_UniversityReport.pdf)

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

- frontline sexual assault services.

The advisory body should be responsible for developing an action plan for the implementation of these recommendations.

The development of an action plan should involve broad and extensive consultation with all relevant stakeholders from the university community and, where relevant, the wider community. The advisory body should also seek independent expertise where relevant and draw on existing research and best practice.

The advisory body should assess and publicly report on the university's progress towards implementation of these recommendations within 18 months of the release of this report. From then on, public reporting on progress should occur on an annual basis.

### *Recommendation 2*

Universities develop a plan for addressing the drivers of sexual assault and sexual harassment that:

- provides students and staff with education about: behaviours that constitute sexual assault and sexual harassment, consent and respectful relationships, 'violence supportive attitudes' and bystander intervention, and
- identifies existing resources and communications campaigns that reinforce key messages of education programs for dissemination to staff and students.

Education programs and communications should:

- target all levels of the organisation – current and future students, staff, residential colleges, sports clubs, student societies and student unions
- be based on best practice and research
- be developed and delivered by individuals and/or organisations with expertise in sexual violence prevention
- be developed in consultation with university students, and
- include measures for evaluating and refining the actions taken.

### *Recommendation 3*

In order to ensure students and staff know about support services and reporting processes for sexual assault or sexual harassment, universities should:

- widely disseminate information about university reporting avenues to staff and students
- widely disseminate information about internal and external services to staff and students, including: university counselling and medical services, campus security, local sexual assault services, police, medical centres, hospitals, counselling services and anti-discrimination agencies
- ensure that information about internal and external reporting procedures and support services is displayed clearly, in a logical place(s) on the university website
- ensure that information about internal and external reporting procedures and support services is provided to students as part of their orientation into university and to new staff as part of their human resources induction/ on-boarding
- ensure that information about internal and external reporting procedures and support services is accessible to all students and staff, including: people with disability, people from CALD backgrounds, and

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

- develop relationships with external services (local sexual assault service, local hospital) to enable referral of students to these services where necessary.

Universities should evaluate the activities undertaken to increase awareness of support services and reporting processes to ensure that these measures have been effective in increasing awareness among staff and students.

### *Recommendation 4*

In order to ensure that actions taken by universities to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment are appropriate, within a year of the release of this report universities should commission an independent, expert-led review of existing university policies and response pathways in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

This review should assess the effectiveness of existing university policies and pathways and make specific recommendations to universities about best practice responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

In the interim, and at an institutional level, universities should draw on sexual violence counselling expertise to develop and review processes for responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment of students to ensure that they:

- ensure the immediate safety and wellbeing of the individual who has experienced the sexual assault or sexual harassment
- are clear and accessible
- provide individuals with control over what happens to their report
- have the flexibility to suit individual circumstances
- provide students with support to continue with their studies
- provide specialist support, from someone who has specialist expertise and training in sexual assault, sexual harassment and trauma counselling of sexual assault survivors, and
- accommodate the needs of students from a diverse range of backgrounds.

### *Recommendation 5*

Universities should conduct an assessment to identify staff members and student representatives within their institution most likely to receive disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Universities should ensure that these staff members and student representatives receive training in responding to disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment, delivered by an organisation with specialist expertise in this area.

### *Recommendation 6*

Universities should ensure that information about individual disclosures and reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment is collected and stored confidentially and used for continuous improvement of processes, including:

- details of the complaint/incident
- steps taken to respond to the complaint/incident, i.e.: whether the individual reported to police, whether the perpetrator was moved to a different lecture/tutorial
- support or assistance received, i.e.: whether the person received counselling from university services, whether they reported to police, whether they received support from an external sexual assault service

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

- time taken to respond to the report and/or refer the person to support services, and
- any feedback provided by the complainant/respondent in relation to the process.

Access to this information should be limited to staff members with responsibility for responding to disclosures and reports and those responsible for improving university responses to disclosures and reports.

On a regular basis – at least every six months – Vice-Chancellors should be provided with de-identified reports of this data, including any trends or identifiable concerns which arise, along with recommendations for any necessary improvements to processes.

### *Recommendation 7*

Within six months of this report, but as soon as possible, universities should conduct an audit of university counselling services to assess:

- the capacity of university counselling services to respond to students' requests for counselling in an appropriately timely manner, and
- how many university counselling staff have received training in working with sexual assault survivors.

As part of this audit, universities should collect data on:

- the average length of time students are required to wait to see a university counsellor, and
- the number of urgent/crisis requests for counselling received.

This data should be assessed to determine whether additional counselling services are required to meet the urgent needs of students who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment.

If additional counselling services are required, universities should ensure that these additional resources are in place as soon as practicable.

### *Recommendation 8*

Universities should engage an independent body to conduct the National university student survey of sexual assault and sexual harassment at three-yearly intervals to track progress in reducing the prevalence of these incidents at a sector-wide level.

### *Recommendation 9*

In addition to considering the implementation of the university recommendations made in this report, residential colleges and university residences should commission an independent, expert-led review of the factors which contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings.

This review should consider:

- appropriate responses by a college or university residence to reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment
- a trauma-informed and rights-based approach in a situation in which an allegation of sexual assault has been made
- the ways that hazing practices and college 'traditions' facilitate a culture which may increase the likelihood of sexual violence
- the role of alcohol in facilitating a culture which may increase the likelihood of sexual violence

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

- the level and nature of supervision in a twenty-four hour residential setting in which large numbers of young people are living away from home, and
- the level and adequacy of training required to equip residential advisors to serve as first responders or in response to matters of sexual assault and harassment.

### **Australian Human Rights Centre. [On Safe Ground](http://www.ahrcentre.org/news/2017/08/03/925)**<sup>2</sup>

#### **Foundational principles:**

- integrated and inclusive framework
- comprehensive, consistent and coordinated design and content
- accessible, transparent and enforceable processes
- resourced, interconnected and responsive support services
- collaborative links with external sexual assault services
- institutional commitment to prevention framework

#### **Enabling themes:**

- visible university leadership
- comprehensive student engagement
- sustained commitment to cultural change.

#### **Systemic recommendations**

1. To ensure a national focus on Australian university efforts to address and prevent sexual assault and harassment, sexual violence in Australian university settings should be incorporated within a National Priority Area under the Fourth Action Plan (from 2019) of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022.
2. To ensure that Australian universities meet minimum standards and promote best practice in responding to issues around sexual assault and harassment, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) should develop Guidance Notes in relation to existing Standards 2.3 (Wellbeing and Safety) and 2.4 (Student Grievances and Complaints) of the Higher Education Standards Framework (2015) to provide greater clarity to universities in interpreting and applying these Standards as they relate to Australian university efforts to address and prevent sexual violence.

TEQSA's quality and compliance assessments should include a specific focus on universities' management and reporting of sexual assault and harassment with reference to the Threshold Standards 2.3 (Wellbeing and Safety), 2.4 (Student Grievances and Complaints) and 6.2 (Corporate Monitoring and Accountability).

3. Universities Australia should establish a national cross-university taskforce to implement the recommendations from both this report (On Safe Ground: Strengthening Australian University Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment (A Good Practice Guide for Australian Universities)) and the Australian Human Rights Commission's report (Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities). The taskforce should focus on ensuring the consistency of policies, procedures and practices

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ahrcentre.org/news/2017/08/03/925>

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

across Australian universities and should facilitate the exchange of good practice strategies and sexual violence prevention training initiatives.

4. To monitor developments and track progress against the findings of 2016 National University Student Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment, an independent national student survey – preferably funded by the Australian government – should be implemented every three years, with the second national survey being implemented in 2019. The survey should be undertaken by an independent organisation with the relevant expertise, such as the Australian Human Rights Commission or another appropriate body. The survey must incorporate consultation with student representatives and be conducted during a period in the academic year that avoids student examination and holiday times.
5. State and territory governments should review the legislative frameworks regulating the relationship between Australian universities and university colleges, halls and residences with a view to enacting requisite amendments or repeals of authorising Acts to ensure that residential college operations and personnel are unequivocally brought within the application of university policies relating to sexual assault and harassment.

### **University sexual assault and harassment policies and procedures**

6. Australian university policies and procedures directed at responding to and preventing sexual assault and harassment should be a specific component of a broad institutional framework or plan that reflects a commitment to gender equity, diversity and inclusivity and to addressing gender inequality, gender-based discrimination and other underlying causes of sexual violence. The framework must be accessible and transparent and universities should regularly engage with staff and students to ensure its relevance and application.
7. Australian universities should establish formal student advisory mechanisms and ensure student representation on relevant committees to enable consistent and substantive student engagement with university leadership in the formulation and evaluation of sexual assault and harassment policies, support services and prevention programs. Student participation should reflect the diversity and distinct needs of the student population.
8. Australian universities should ensure the visibility and transparency of their sexual assault and harassment policies, reporting mechanisms and student support services through clear and prominent signposting on university websites, in university publications, and at appropriate campus locations. This information should be made available in different languages.
9. Australian universities should develop a stand-alone policy for responding to sexual assault and harassment that includes a prominent statement of express prohibition and clear definitions of proscribed conduct; provides reporting mechanisms that guarantee anonymous and confidential reports of sexual violence; and incorporates simple, fair, accessible and robust procedures founded on principles of natural justice that support the prompt and appropriate investigation of complaints. The policy should provide undertakings regarding privacy, confidentiality and the secure storage of information.

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

The policy should be sensitively framed and culturally appropriate and should apply to staff and students across all sites of university-related activity, including residential colleges, offshore campuses, university-affiliated travel, internship programs and the use of online technology.

The policy should clarify the difference between internal disciplinary processes and external criminal investigations, and specify how complaints are handled internally by the university pending any criminal investigation. The policy should specify interim measures available to students during the internal investigation of a complaint. In constituting disciplinary hearing panels or committees established to adjudicate complaints of sexual violence, universities should appoint individuals who have relevant expertise and experience and who reflect the diversity of the student population.

The policy should be subject to regular monitoring, evaluation and revision, as appropriate.

10. To coordinate responses to, and administer reports of, sexual assault and harassment, Australian universities should implement a centralised mechanism to facilitate consistent and comprehensive processes for reporting, make referrals to student support services, systematically record data, track investigations and disciplinary processes, disseminate information, manage relationships with external services, and monitor the implementation and regular review of policies.
11. To ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of policies, relevant university staff – including university-designated first responders – should be fully apprised of university policies and available student support services and should be trained to respond sensitively and appropriately to disclosures and reports of sexual assault and harassment.

### **Student support services**

12. To provide a single point of entry for victims of sexual assault and harassment, Australian universities should establish an integrated sexual violence support service on university campuses. This service should provide holistic support for victims of sexual assault and harassment, potentially providing for the co-location of therapeutic and academic support services required by victims – such as medical, counselling, legal, academic and accommodation support.

The service should be staffed by trauma-informed sexual assault practitioners who are equipped to provide crisis intervention and support; accompaniment of victims to hospitals or specialist medical services; initial advice on various reporting processes; and assistance in relation to academic support (such as special consideration) and accommodation arrangements. The staff should be skilled in responding appropriately to the needs of students with disability, students from culturally diverse backgrounds, and those who identify as trans and gender diverse.

Australian universities should provide adequate and sustainable funding to support sufficient numbers of appropriately trained staff in the service, and the provision of a 24-hour telephone service to support students after hours or on weekends, or students who

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

might be at an off-campus location or feel uncomfortable with the prospect of a face-face interaction with university staff or agencies.

13. To supplement internal student support services, Australian universities should establish collaborative links with external agencies – including local police sexual offences units, sexual assault units at local hospitals, domestic violence and sexual assault services, and women’s legal centres. These relationships can help to coordinate, improve and expedite the investigation and management of sexual violence cases and can provide a platform for sharing resources, particularly around the development of prevention strategies.
14. Australian universities should review their policies governing the application by students for special consideration and amend policies as necessary to take account of the potential impact of sexual assault and harassment on a student’s academic performance. Relevant university staff should be appropriately trained to facilitate these requests and to accommodate the student’s immediate or long-term academic needs (for example, reschedule class or tutorial times, extend deadlines and expedite applications).
15. Given the proximate nature of the living arrangements within Australian university residential colleges, college staff and students in leadership roles should be trained to sensitively manage the concerns and needs of victims of sexual assault and harassment, friends/ associates, bystanders and alleged perpetrators. Residential colleges should ensure the availability of alternative accommodation to enable an expeditious change in living arrangements in order to minimise contact between the respective parties.

### **Prevention strategies**

16. Australian universities and residential colleges should implement evidence-based sexual violence prevention education programs that are specifically designed for the student-university environment, relevant and applicable to diverse student groups, and delivered by professionally trained experts.

These programs should be delivered as widely as possible within the university, and should be particularly encouraged for staff and students in leadership and pastoral care roles.

Sexual violence prevention education programs should be delivered via diverse methods, including online and face-to-face. They should cover topics such as definitions of sexual assault harassment and consent, sexual ethics, bystander intervention, responding to disclosures, and myths around sexual violence.

Sexual violence prevention education programs should be conducted over multiple periods rather than in single sessions, and must be implemented each year to cover new student intakes and changes in university leadership and staff.

Such programs should be regularly evaluated to ensure ongoing utility.

17. Given the association between alcohol consumption and sexual violence in university settings, Australian universities and residential colleges should review policies and practices relating to the pricing, availability and service of alcohol on university campuses, at



## Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.

university events, and in residential colleges to ensure the responsible service and consumption of alcohol and to minimise the potential for harmful behaviour.

18. Australian university student codes of conduct and residential college codes of conduct or charters of rights and responsibilities should be reviewed and revised to ensure that they explicitly outline expectations, rights and responsibilities, and sanctions in relation to sexual assault and harassment.

### Universities Australia: [10-Point Action Plan](#)<sup>3</sup>

Universities Australia has developed these ten actions as broad, sector-wide initiatives.

They will work in concert with a wide range of university-specific measures.

#### Awareness and Prevention

1. *DEVELOPING RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION FOR AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS*

Universities Australia will develop a respectful relationships education program tailored for students in Australia's universities. The program will be evidence-based and draw on best practice. It will take into account the diversity of the university student population and the diversity of Australian universities. It will build on existing education initiatives already in place at a number of institutions.

2. *NEXT STEPS IN THE RESPECT. NOW. ALWAYS. INITIATIVE*

Universities Australia re-commits to the Respect. Now. Always. initiative as a long-term program of action led by the university sector to prevent and address sexual assault and sexual harassment. Through the Respect. Now. Always. initiative, universities will continue to raise awareness about sexual harassment and sexual assault, and lift the visibility of support services available for those who experience it. This will include making further Respect. Now. Always. awareness campaign materials available to universities for their O-Weeks and student inductions in coming years.

3. *NEW PRINCIPLES FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENT AND STAFF INTERACTION*

Universities Australia, the National Tertiary Education Union and the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations will develop principles to guide interaction between supervisors and postgraduate students. The three organisations have begun working together to draft these principles and will continue this important element of our work in coming months.

#### Improving Support

4. *SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT EDUCATION AND AWARENESS TRAINING FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP AND STAFF*

Universities Australia will make available to member universities new training modules for university staff and university leaders. The first of its kind, this university-specific program will educate staff and shape their awareness of unacceptable behaviours and will assist them to respond to and support those affected by sexual assault and harassment. This training is being developed by the Australian Psychological Society's training institute and will be available from late 2017. A number of universities that have existing training programs in place may continue to use locally-developed programs.

---

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/uni-participation-quality/students/Student-safety/Respect--Now--Always-#.WZUos\\_Lwkhs](https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/uni-participation-quality/students/Student-safety/Respect--Now--Always-#.WZUos_Lwkhs)

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

### *5. EXTENDING FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING TO MORE FRONTLINE UNIVERSITY STAFF*

As universities seek to institute, upgrade or extend their first responder training, Universities Australia will coordinate the provision of this specialist training for university staff through Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia or an equivalent local provider. This training will equip more university staff with the skills to respond effectively and compassionately when someone discloses an experience of sexual assault or sexual harassment.

### *6. SPECIALIST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR UNIVERSITY COUNSELLORS*

In a national first, Universities Australia will make available to member universities a new training module in specialist professional development for university counsellors. This unit will enhance and extend the skills of mental health clinicians to provide support to people affected by sexual assault and sexual harassment. This professional development module is being produced by the Australian Psychological Society's training institute and will be available from late 2017.

### *7. DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSITIES*

Universities Australia will develop a set of best practice guidelines on responding to reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment in a compassionate and timely way. These guidelines will inform the review and development of university sexual assault and sexual harassment policies to assist Australian universities as they seek out further best practice resources and guidance.

### *8. AN INTERIM NATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT LINE IN THE MONTHS FOLLOWING THE SURVEY RELEASE*

To ensure strong specialist support is available to student survivors in the period immediately following the release of the national report, Universities Australia will establish an interim national telephone referral and support service operated by Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia. The support line will operate from 31 July 2017 until 30 November 2017 and will be a complement to local university counselling services during this period. It will operate 24/7.

## **Reviewing Progress**

### *9. THE NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY*

Universities Australia will undertake a follow-up national student survey in three years to measure the effectiveness of initiatives undertaken by the university sector and to guide further action.

## **Colleges and Residential Halls**

### *10. TRAINING AND EDUCATION IN COLLEGES AND RESIDENTIAL HALLS*

Universities Australia will make resources available to colleges and residential halls to assist them to prevent and address sexual assault and sexual harassment.

We will make available the Respect. Now. Always. awareness campaign materials to colleges and residential halls and encourage them to join us in implementing the Respect. Now. Always. initiative.

We will work with University Colleges Australia to encourage key staff in their colleges to access first responder training so that a student's first contact when they disclose an incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment is compassionate and supportive. We will make available the best practice guidelines for sexual assault and sexual harassment policies

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

to colleges and residential halls. We will encourage them to draw on the guidelines in developing their own institutional policies on responding to reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment in a compassionate and timely way.

### Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations<sup>4</sup>

#### **Recommendations: prior to survey release**

1. Ensure adequate resourcing of support staff in anticipation of the survey result release
2. Information provision

#### **Recommendations: Short term (within 6 months)**

3. Creation of University taskforce
4. Commence review of policy, processes, protocols
5. Institute reporting at governance bodies
6. Review all communications materials
7. Meet with student representatives

#### **Recommendations: Medium term (6 months – 2 years)**

8. Implement a standalone sexual assault and sexual harassment policy
9. Resourcing: ensure specialised staff to support students
10. Reporting and investigative structures
11. Community standards
12. Pre-arrival information
13. Institute first responder training
14. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students
15. Stronger systems to support students in residential environments
16. Establishing community campaigns for primary prevention

#### **Recommendations: Long term (2 years – 5 years)**

17. Students are valued as equal members of the University community
18. A commitment to ongoing reporting and periodic reviews
19. Commitment to a future survey

### End Rape on Campus: [Connecting the Dots](#)<sup>5</sup>

Based on the evidence presented in our report, EROC Australia makes several recommendations for changes that are needed at the university level, and beyond. EROC Australia recommends that individual universities:

#### **Implement evidence - based education campaigns**

1. Australian universities remove any 'safety tips' from their websites that place blame on victims or perpetuate rape myths.
2. Australian universities implement evidence-based education campaigns about sexual assault and consent, such as The Full Stop Foundation's "Sex, Safety & Respect" program which has been developed specifically for university staff and students.

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.capa.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/CAPA-Recommendations-SASH-survey-.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5762fc04f5e231826f09afae/t/58b3d08ddb29d6e7a2b8271d/1488179368580/Connecting+the+dots.pdf>

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

### **Provide training for staff and student leaders on responding to disclosures of sexual assault and harassment**

3. Australian universities ensure that relevant staff receive training from an organisation with expertise in sexual assault on responding to disclosures of sexual assault and harassment. Specifically, we recommend that Australian universities participate in the Full Stop Foundation's "Sex, Safety & Respect" training program, including the "Educators Sex & Ethics Program (Train the Trainer)" for university staff members, and the "Sex, Ethics & Sexual Violence Prevention Program" for student leaders.
4. Australian universities should provide additional training to staff with responsibility for receiving disclosures or reports, managing complaints processes, investigating complaints or making decisions about complaints. This should include training about the university's policies and procedures, skills appropriate to the person's role, and training about sexual assault and rape myths, such as the Full Stop Foundation's "Educators Sex & Ethics Program".

### **Improve support services for survivors**

5. The number of counsellors at university counselling services be increased in order to ensure survivors are able to access counselling in a timely manner.
6. All counsellors at university counselling services be given ongoing training from a specialist sexual assault service on counselling survivors of sexual assault.
7. Each Australian university hires designated counsellors with expertise and experience in sexual assault and complex trauma counselling.
8. Australian universities create sexual assault support centres to provide holistic support to student survivors, including:
  - \* assisting survivors to access appropriate and timely counselling, for example by helping them to bypass wait times at university counselling services
  - \* assisting survivors to access appropriate services including medical or legal assistance, and providing support and accompaniment in making police reports
  - \* assisting survivors facing housing difficulties
  - \* assisting survivors facing financial difficulty as a result of their assault, for example by providing information about getting HECS debts waived
  - \* providing accurate information about the survivor's rights at the university, and about formal reporting processes
  - \* assisting survivors in making official reports to the university, and advocating for the survivor within these processes, for example by assisting to write complaints or appeals, and advocating for the survivor when university officials do not follow their own policies or otherwise respond inappropriately
  - \* helping survivors access special consideration and academic help without having to go through unnecessarily bureaucratic mechanisms.

### **Create and implement policies and procedures that are survivor - centric.**

9. Australian universities create policies and procedures that directly and separately address sexual assault and harassment as distinct issues.
10. Sexual assault and harassment policies and procedures be written in easy to understand language.
11. Australian universities ensure that their sexual assault and harassment policies and procedures include the following:
  - \* Behavioural definitions of sexual assault and harassment.

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

- \* A clear distinction between making a disclosure and making a report. Making a disclosure should be defined as disclosing an incident to a staff member without initiating formal complaint procedures. This may, for example, be done in order to seek support, special consideration or so that the incident is recorded in university data. Making a report should be defined as making a formal report about an incident in order to initiate formal complaint or disciplinary procedures. There should also be a requirement that staff members who receive a disclosure or report brief the survivor on this distinction.
- \* Clear information about how a survivor can make a disclosure or report, including:
  - \* The name, contact details and role of staff members that the survivor may make a face-to-face disclosure or report to
  - \* Information on, and links to, an online portal through which survivors can make a disclosure or report in writing. This should include information about who will read the written disclosure or report, and when the survivor can expect to receive a response.
  - \* A right to make a disclosure anonymously. This allows the university to gather data about sexual assault and overall trends at the university, while protecting anonymity for survivors who do not wish to be identified.
- \* A requirement that once a survivor makes a disclosure or report, they are given the name and contact details of one contact person who can provide them with information and updates throughout the process. This will help to ensure clear communication between the university and the survivor, and ensure the survivor does not have to re-tell their story to multiple people as the process continues.
- \* A requirement that once a survivor makes a disclosure or report, they are provided with thorough information about what the different procedures are within the university, how they can access these options, and what possible outcomes for different procedures are.
- \* Information about how the survivor's confidentiality will be protected at all stages of the disclosure or reporting process.
- \* Information about whether any staff members are required to report disclosures or reports to any other staff members at the university, for example if they are required to report the matter to their supervisor. If this is the case, the policy should require that the staff member not provide the survivor's name to any other person unless the survivor consents.
- \* A requirement that no reports to police will be made without the consent of the survivor, unless the staff member is a mandatory reporter. Information should be included about what staff are mandatory reporters and what their reporting requirements are.
- \* A procedure by which the university can take interim action to exclude an alleged perpetrator from premises prior to the outcome of a formal complaint/disciplinary process. This procedure should be available after a report is made and should be designed to protect the survivor and others from physical and psychological harm that may result from proximity with the alleged perpetrator. It should give relevant staff members the power to temporarily exclude alleged perpetrators from classes that the survivor attends, residences that the survivor lives at (regardless of whether the perpetrator also lives at the residence), and from the university altogether. The procedure should not require a formal decision-making process or a high standard of proof, but should be exercised when it appears likely that exclusion is necessary to

ensure the survivor can continue their education and life at the university without re-traumatisation, or to otherwise protect the survivor or others from harm. The procedure should clearly state how a survivor can request that such action be taken, and should require that staff members who receive a disclosure or report explain this procedure to the survivor.

- \* A formal complaint/discipline procedure by which incidents can be investigated and disciplinary action can be taken against perpetrators. This procedure should:
  - \* Be designed in conjunction with survivors and experts in sexual assault and trauma to ensure the procedure reduces the risk of re-traumatisation for survivors. This is integral to encourage reporting and ensuring survivors can safely access the procedure.
  - \* Ensure that survivors are afforded procedural fairness throughout the process.
  - \* Clearly state how a survivor can initiate disciplinary proceedings against a perpetrator, and should require that staff members who receive a disclosure or report explain this procedure to the survivor.
  - \* Create a centre responsible for overseeing all formal complaint/discipline procedures undertaken. Such a centre could record data about complaints and monitor systemic issues, ensure all investigators and decision-makers are appropriately trained, appoint investigators and decision-makers, advise staff and students on the relevant processes, and monitor investigations to ensure they comply with procedure and are undertaken in a timely manner.
  - \* State how evidence will be gathered and by whom, for example by providing that internal or external investigators be appointed.
  - \* Designate a decision-making body, for example the investigator or a separate entity or person.
  - \* Require that all investigators and decision-makers receive appropriate training on an ongoing basis. Training should cover the principles of investigation and decision-making, as well as training about sexual assault, trauma, and rape myths.
  - \* Provide the relevant civil standard of proof.
  - \* Provide what possible outcomes of the process are, including disciplinary action that can be taken against perpetrators such as expulsion from the university.
  - \* State that the survivor has a right to know the outcome of such a procedure, including what findings are made and what disciplinary action is taken against a perpetrator.
  - \* State that the survivor has the right to be provided with written reasons for any outcome, including a decision not to investigate. Reasons must be sufficiently detailed to allow the survivor to decide whether to pursue an internal or external appeal.
  - \* Include a formal procedure for appealing the outcome of such a procedure. The appeal must be conducted and decided by people other than those involved in the initial decision.
  - \* Include external appeal options that are available (e.g. to the relevant Ombudsman or the Australian Human Rights Commission).
  - \* An explanation of how the survivor will be kept informed about her/his disclosure or report.

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

- \* Time limits for university staff in each step in the process, including how long a formal disciplinary process will take.
- \* A clear procedure by which a survivor can complain if they are unhappy with how their disclosure or report is being dealt with.
- \* A statement that the survivor can withdraw their report at any time.
- \* A statement that the survivor may have a support person accompany them to any meetings regarding their disclosure or report, including disciplinary proceedings.
- \* Links to other relevant policies and procedures, including special consideration policies.
- \* Referrals to relevant internal and external support services, including counselling, medical and legal services.
- \* Sexual assault and harassment policies and procedures should not include any of the following:
  - \* Any time limit on reporting sexual assault or harassment to the university.
  - \* Any requirement or suggestion that survivors should informally resolve incidents of sexual assault or harassment with the perpetrator.
  - \* Any requirement for survivors to make a police report, or any statement that the university cannot act unless or if a police report is made.
  - \* Any requirement for the university or staff members to make a police report without the consent of the survivor, unless there are serious concerns for safety unless they are a mandatory reporter.
- \* Australian universities create web pages for student survivors that clearly provide all the above information.
- \* Australian universities also use other methods to disseminate this information including by incorporating it into training or other material for new students, and incorporating it into pamphlets available across campus.
- \* Sexual assault and harassment policies and procedures are translated into languages other than English that are spoken by significant proportions of the student population. Survivors who need an interpreter to communicate effectively with staff should be provided one by the university.
- \* Sexual assault and harassment policies and procedures are published in formats that make them accessible for people with disabilities. Survivors who need a sign language interpreter or other intermediary to communicate effectively with staff should be provided one by the university.

### **Maintain effective records**

17. Australian universities maintain thorough records about disclosures and reports of sexual assault and harassment, and how those disclosures and reports were dealt with. Records should include:

- \* De-identified details of the incident
- \* How long the process took between the disclosure or report and final outcome
- \* If the university or the survivor chose to discontinue the process, why they chose to do this
- \* What disciplinary action was taken against the perpetrator(s)
- \* If no disciplinary action was taken, why this was the case
- \* What action was taken following the disclosure or report to prevent similar incidents recurring in the future; and

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

- \* Whether there were any issues raised about how the disclosure or report was dealt with.
18. Australian universities make de-identified statistics about sexual assault and harassment publicly available on their websites.

### **Improve oversight of student residences**

19. Australian universities require that any residences owned by the university comply with university policies and procedures regarding sexual assault and harassment, rather than using their own ad hoc procedures.
20. Where the legal relationship between a privately-owned residence and a university allows, the university should require that:
  - \* Disclosures or reports of sexual assault made to staff at the residence are reported to the university administration. Such reports must be de-identified unless survivors consent to their name being included.
  - \* The residence complies with university policies and procedures regarding sexual assault and harassment rather than using their own.
21. Where the legal relationship between a privately-owned residence and the university does not allow the university to place requirements on the residence, the university should actively encourage it to comply with the above requirements regardless. Where such a residence does not comply with university policies and procedures regarding sexual assault and harassment, the university should work with the residence as far as possible to ensure its policies and procedures are consistent with university policies and procedures.

## **Changing the Culture: Report of the Universities UK Taskforce<sup>6</sup>**

### **Senior leadership**

1. The Taskforce recommends that all university leaders should afford tackling violence against women, harassment and hate crime priority status and dedicate appropriate resources to tackling it.

### **Institution wide approach**

The Taskforce recommends that universities should:

2. take an institution-wide approach to tackling violence against women, harassment and hate crime. (One way of adopting this institution-wide approach to responding to incidents of sexual violence is to use the points set out in chapter 5 of this report as a guide).
3. provide their governing bodies with regular progress reports summarising what progress has been made towards adopting a cross-institution approach. This should include reporting on the resource made available and used to support an effective cross-institution approach, including any recommendations for additional resource.
4. carry out a regular impact assessment of their approach.
5. involve their students' union in developing, maintaining and reviewing all elements of a cross-institution response.

### **Prevention**

The Taskforce recommends that universities should:

6. adopt an evidence-based bystander intervention programme.

---

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2016/changing-the-culture.pdf>



## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

7. ensure that partnership agreements between the student and the university highlight up-front the behaviours that are expected from all students as part of the university community, set out disciplinary sanctions and state the university's commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students.
8. embed a zero-tolerance approach across all institutional activities including outreach activities with schools and further education colleges, engagement with local bars and nightclubs, student inductions (including international student inductions), and student information.
9. take meaningful steps to embed into their human resources processes (such as contracts, training, inductions) measures to ensure staff understand the importance of fostering a zero-tolerance culture and are empowered to take responsibility for this.

### **Response**

The Taskforce recommends that universities should:

10. develop a clear, accessible and representative disclosure response for incidents of sexual violence and rape, working with relevant external agencies where appropriate.
11. take reasonable and practicable steps to implement a centralised reporting system.
12. conduct a thorough assessment of which staff members need to be trained and what training needs to be provided. A clear, multi-tiered training strategy covering different types of incident can then be developed.
13. build and maintain partnerships with local specialist services to ensure consistent referral pathways for students.
14. establish and maintain strong links with the local police and NHS in order to develop and maintain a strategic partnership to prevent and respond to violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting students.

### **Managing situations where students have committed a disciplinary offence which may also constitute a criminal offence**

The Taskforce recommends that:

15. Universities UK should conduct a thorough review of the 1994 Zellick guidelines and produce new guidance for the sector on how to handle disciplinary issues that may also constitute a criminal offence. (See Pinsent Masons Guidance for HE Institutions)

### **Sharing good practice**

The Taskforce recommends that:

16. Universities UK should hold an annual national conference for the next three years to facilitate the sharing of good practice on matters related to the work of the Taskforce.
17. Universities UK should publish a directory of case studies and templates based on what the sector is already doing (to include reference to international resources and activities).

### **Online Harassment**

The Taskforce recommends that:

18. Universities UK should work with relevant bodies such as the NUS, Jisc and Reclaim the Internet to assess what further support may be needed in relation to online harassment and hate crime.

## [White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault](#)<sup>7</sup>

### **Coordinated Campus and Community Response**

1. Institute a coordinated campus and community response framework for preventing and addressing sexual misconduct, so all members of the school and the larger community understand how they can work together to:
  - \* Assess the school's climate in regard to sexual misconduct, including through the use of campus climate surveys (see Element #5 (Climate Surveys, Performance Measurement, and Evaluation), below);
  - \* Promote safe campuses free from sexual misconduct;
  - \* Provide trauma-informed services and support for survivors;
  - \* Develop fair and effective policies and protocols;
  - \* Hold perpetrators accountable under these policies and protocols;
  - \* Strengthen student knowledge and bystander intervention skills;
  - \* Promote campus and community education and collaboration;
  - \* Foster coalitions and networks;
  - \* Change organisational practices; and
  - \* Measure the effectiveness of the school's efforts.
2. Designate a qualified and fully-trained Title IX coordinator who is fully accessible to students and whose name and contact information is easily accessible to students, including on the school's website. University leadership should:
  - \* Provide the Title IX coordinator with the authority and support necessary to carry out his/her duties;
  - \* Encourage the Title IX coordinator to develop strong relationships with students, staff, faculty, administrators, and community partners, as well as with other Title IX coordinators in the region to share information, knowledge, and expertise.
3. Include relevant stakeholder groups in the campus and community efforts to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct, such as representatives from:
  - \* The student body, including survivors, student leaders, representatives from student government, athletics, sororities and fraternities, resident advisors, etc. Undergraduate and graduate students, from affiliated campuses, and as appropriate, should be represented;
  - \* The Title IX Coordinator;
  - \* Faculty (including those with expertise on sexual misconduct);
  - \* School administration;
  - \* Alumni;
  - \* Campus health centre;
  - \* Campus women's centre;
  - \* Campus law enforcement;
  - \* Community victim advocacy groups;
  - \* Local law enforcement;
  - \* Local rape crisis centres;
  - \* Local hospital(s) or other healthcare providers;
  - \* Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) community; and
  - \* Other relevant and diverse groups.

---

<sup>7</sup><https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/images/Documents/1.4.17.VAW%20Event.Guide%20for%20College%20Presidents.PDF>

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

4. Establish a dedicated task force to implement or monitor the campus and community response framework, and ensure that the task force meets regularly and includes a diverse cross-section of the college or university community, based on the suggestions above. The task force should be empowered to communicate with senior leadership through various channels (i.e., not only through senior administrators and deans) and to make formal recommendations to the university or college president for improvements to the campus response to sexual misconduct.
5. Support student groups that focus on campus education campaigns (such as bystander intervention and sexual assault prevention and awareness) and ensure that members of such groups are a part of the dedicated task force.
6. Develop and maintain, as appropriate, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the university or college and community partners such as the local police department and rape crisis centre. MOUs should clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of each entity, including cross-training on policies, procedures, and resources of both organizations and clear expectations for effective sharing of resources.

### **Prevention and Education**

1. Provide prevention and education programs on sexual misconduct to all incoming first-year students, transfer students, and graduate students, and throughout the course of all students' education. Consider programs that:
  - \* Provide bystander intervention training and empowerment opportunities drawn from evidence-based programs, like Green Dot and Bringing in the Bystander;
  - \* Challenge biases and harmful attitudes – related to gender, sex, intimate relationships, and violence;
  - \* Engage men as well as women in prevention programming, including training as peer educators and leaders;
  - \* Provide customized programming for student leaders and groups, including sororities and fraternities, athletic programs, extracurricular organizations, and resident advisors; and
  - \* Consider the needs of diverse populations, including LGBTQ students, students with disabilities, English learner students, international students, students of colour, students studying abroad, and others.
2. Create and reinforce positive changes in skills, behaviours, and social norms by providing repeated exposure to consistent prevention and education messages and programming throughout a student's tenure. Brief, one-time interventions, especially when focused only on raising awareness about sexual misconduct, are not usually effective for creating lasting behaviour change.
3. Make information widely available to students about on-campus and off-campus resources. This may include web-accessible information, social media campaigns, printed fliers, and placing relevant information in campus rest rooms, in residence halls, on the back of student IDs, and other places, making it as easy as possible to access the information.
4. Provide annual training for university and college administrators at all levels, campus law enforcement and security, faculty, staff, contract employees, and volunteers on sexual misconduct policies and on Title IX, Title IV, and Clery Act obligations, including the provision of a victim-centered, trauma-informed response to sexual misconduct.
5. Offer trainings for students, faculty, and staff on how to effectively respond when a friend or family member discloses an incident of sexual misconduct.

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

6. Implement an “It's On US” campaign or a similar public awareness and bystander intervention campaign to support positive social norms on campus.
7. Develop an annual communications plan that clearly and effectively conveys to the campus community (including parents and community stakeholders) the timing and approach for rolling out the prevention, education, and training programming.

### **Policy Development and Implementation**

1. Adopt a comprehensive policy for responding to sexual misconduct that applies to students. Develop this policy with input from the task force (see Element 1 above) and ensure it is informed by principles of fair process and privacy, as detailed below. The policies and procedures that schools use to resolve allegations of sexual misconduct must be equitable so that everyone – complainants, respondents, and the rest of the school community – receives the benefit of a non-discrimination policy and can have confidence in the resolution. A prompt and equitable process that provides the same opportunities for all parties will lead to sound and supportable decisions.
2. Have a grievance process that includes:
  - \* A clearly defined process for investigation and resolution of complaints that:
    - \* Includes a prompt, adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation;
    - \* Uses the preponderance-of-the-evidence standard (i.e., more likely than not) to determine whether sexual misconduct has occurred;
    - \* Provides, among other things:
      - \* An equal opportunity to present relevant witnesses and other evidence;
      - \* Equal access to lawyers, other advocates, or support persons; and
      - \* Equal opportunity to appeal, if appeal options are offered; and
      - \* Is interpreted consistently with any due process rights of the parties involved.
  - \* Clearly defined remedies, including interim measures, and a range of sanctions.
  - \* Timely methods to keep both the complainant and respondent informed of the outcome of the grievance process, consistent with Title IX, the Clery Act, and FERPA.

### **Reporting Options, Advocacy, and Support Services**

1. Encourage and facilitate the reporting of sexual misconduct for those who desire to report. Make clear, accessible information available that describes the various reporting options for survivors, including:
  - \* Options to use the school's grievance process, pursue criminal charges, or both;
  - \* How to secure supportive or interim measures; and
  - \* The offices or individuals with whom students can speak confidentially (e.g., for counselling, advocacy, health, mental health, pastoral, or sexual assault-related services).
2. Consider developing an online system for anonymous reporting of sexual misconduct.
3. Designate a full-time, well-trained advocate for victims of sexual misconduct:
  - \* Whose contact information is made widely accessible;
  - \* Who helps make students aware of the various reporting and confidential disclosure options and support services that are available so they can make informed choices; and
  - \* Who keeps all communications confidential, except in cases where the advocate is required to disclose information under state or federal mandatory reporting laws.

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

4. Provide resources and accommodations to support a survivor after an assault, including access and referrals to:
  - \* A victim advocate;
  - \* Emergency medical services, including the option for a medical forensic examination;
  - \* Law enforcement;
  - \* Mental health services;
  - \* Transportation to and from services (if the survivor does not have ready access to such services);
  - \* Housing accommodations, if the survivor would like to change living arrangements or location;
  - \* Educational accommodations, such as taking classes remotely, retaking classes, or taking a leave of absence; and
  - \* Other reasonable accommodations and support services as requested by the survivor.
5. Have a campus health centre that employs a trained sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) or have an MOU with a hospital that has a sexual assault forensic examiner (SAFE) or SANE program.
6. Ensure services and accommodations are responsive to the needs of diverse populations, including LGBTQ students, students with disabilities, students of colour, undocumented students, English learner students, international students, students studying abroad, and others.

## **Climate Surveys, Performance Measurement, and Evaluation**

1. Regularly conduct research-based sexual misconduct climate surveys. Effective surveys often are overseen by university leadership, with additional involvement from the task force, and have several phases:
  - \* Examine existing campus resources and institutional responses related to sexual misconduct in preparation for the implementation of a campus climate survey;
  - \* Develop and administer the climate survey to students and, if deemed appropriate, administrators, faculty, and staff;
  - \* Review the results of the survey and develop an action plan grounded in the survey results; and
  - \* Continue to use campus climate surveys to inform all current and future prevention and response efforts, and to identify improvements to institutional responses to campus sexual misconduct.
  - \* Repeat this process on a regular basis.
2. Keep accurate and timely statistics on the number of incidents of sexual misconduct. Include the number of incidents reported to campus or local police, the number investigated, the results of the investigation, and any sanctions imposed. Moreover, coordination of recordkeeping (for instance, in a confidential log maintained by the Title IX coordinator) can resolve recurring problems and identify students or employees who have multiple complaints filed against them.
3. In accordance with Element 1 (above), communicate information learned from climate surveys and statistical collection with the university community on a regular basis.
4. Arrange a partnership with an impartial evaluator experienced in sexual violence research to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the school's sexual misconduct policies and practices—and publicly share significant aspects of the evaluation. All approaches without

## **Respect. Now. Always. Recommendations and Initiatives.**

an existing evidence base should include an effort to evaluate them to demonstrate their effectiveness in preventing sexual misconduct.

5. Commit to adapting policies and programs on an ongoing basis, as identified through school administrators, the task force, other experts and community stakeholders, and the aforementioned independent monitoring and evaluation process, as appropriate.
6. Survey students who have been through the grievance process, whether as complainants or respondents, about their experiences with the process, and ask for their recommendations for making improvements.

### **Transparency**

1. Have a campus-wide website focused exclusively on both school and local community resources for prevention and response to sexual misconduct, and ensure it is easily accessible.
2. Publish, as appropriate, the findings from research and evaluations of sexual misconduct programs the school has offered and include this information on the school's website and in annual reports.
3. Have policies and procedures on responding to sexual misconduct that are available in multiple formats and easy for students, employees, and the general public to access, including information that is formatted in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
4. Provide information on the school's sexual misconduct policies and practices. This information should be accessible for the different audiences it is intended to serve (e.g., students of diverse backgrounds and languages, parents, faculty, administration, and staff).
5. Make campus climate survey data and other relevant forms of aggregate data on sexual misconduct publicly available on the school's website, including the school's complete Annual Security Report (required by the Clery Act) on its website.