

Update report on implementation of recommendations from *Change the course:* *National report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities*

as at September 2020

Recommendation no.	Action taken since last milestone report in February 2019	Planned/future action
<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p><i>Vice-Chancellors take direct responsibility to implement recommendations, including decision-making and monitoring and evaluation of actions taken. Establish an advisory body. Develop an action plan.</i></p>	<p>The Vice Chancellor’s Advisory Committee for Addressing Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment on Campus (‘Advisory Committee’), which was established in October 2017 in response to the <i>Change the course</i> report, has met regularly since it was formed. Its members includes representatives from the University’s senior leadership, students, general staff, academic staff and health professionals (including staff from the University’s counselling service). The Advisory Committee provides guidance and feedback regarding the University’s ongoing implementation of the recommendations made in the <i>Change the course</i> report and <i>Respect Now Always</i> initiatives. Information about the University’s work in this area is published on the University website.</p>	<p>It is intended that the Advisory Committee will continue to operate, particularly in light of Universities Australia’s planned follow-up national survey of students, which was originally planned for September-October 2020 and has been rescheduled by Universities Australia to late 2021 due to COVID-19.</p>

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<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p><i>Universities develop a plan for addressing the drivers of sexual assault and sexual harassment that includes education programs, and identifies existing resources and communications campaigns that reinforce key messages</i></p>	<p>University Respect Officers have responsibility for delivering sexual assault and sexual harassment awareness and prevention sessions for students and staff. In late 2019, a fulltime Respect Officer role was trialed on each of the Fremantle and Sydney campuses. In mid-2020 the University approved these as continuing roles. In addition, there is an Aboriginal Respect Officer on the Broome campus.</p> <p>In 2019 the Respect Officer roles were extended to include family and domestic violence, as well as sexual assault and sexual harassment.</p> <p>The University's approach towards sexual assault and sexual harassment awareness and prevention sessions is continuously reviewed and improved. It is informed by current best practice according to information from the Australian Human Rights Commission, Universities Australia and organisations such as Our Watch, interactions with other universities, and publications including TEQSA's <i>Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector</i> (July 2020).</p> <p>In-person and online sessions on sexual assault and sexual harassment awareness and prevention have been delivered to students. The sessions have been delivered internally and by external providers. Information sessions for new students on the University's student code of conduct, and</p>	<p>Awareness and prevention sessions on sexual assault and sexual harassment will be delivered to students and staff, and will be subject to review for continuous improvement.</p> <p>In accordance with the Sex Discrimination Commissioner's <i>Respect@Work</i> report, training on sexual harassment will address the drivers of gender-based violence and include content on workplace rights. Universities Australia's module titled <i>Sexual harassment and sexual assault: What are the drivers and how can staff respond?</i> will be implemented as part of staff training, and will supplement existing staff training on Responding to Disclosure of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment.</p> <p>Campus communications will be extended more widely including social media content.</p>

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	<p>drug and alcohol policies, include content relating to sexual assault and sexual harassment.</p> <p>In 2019 campus communications regarding sexual assault and sexual harassment were reviewed and redeveloped based on feedback from students and staff, and specific communications regarding sexual harassment on public transport were developed for student orientation in February 2020. Following the move to a largely online student learning environment since March 2020 due to COVID-19, there has been an emphasis on online engagement with students in relation to sexual assault, sexual harassment, and family and domestic violence. To complement existing website information, new webpages has been developed on topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise if you have been sexually assaulted or sexual harassed • Family and domestic violence including how to help someone who may be affected • Bystander intervention • Online safety and abuse <p>These webpages are easily accessible from the student home page on the University website, and the information has been promoted to students through the national student board and electronic student newsletters.</p>	<p>The University looks forward to the release of a <i>Respectful Relationships Education Program for Australian University Students</i>, which has been developed in partnership by Universities Australia, Our Watch and the Victorian Government and is intended to provide an evidence-based, whole-of-institution model to prevent violence against women at and through universities. It is understood that the module has been piloted at four universities over the last 18 months, and will be released to the sector over the next year. When the module is available, the University plans to review its suitability for Notre Dame and, if appropriate, implement it as part of the <i>Respect Now Always</i> program for students.</p>

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	<p>In March 2020, the Sex Discrimination Commissioner released a report titled <i>Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplace</i>. In accordance with recommendations 11 and 12 of that report, the University is reviewing and extending training which is provided to staff and students on sexual harassment so that the training addresses the drivers of gender-based violence and includes content on workplace rights.</p> <p>In March 2020, Universities Australia released a free training module for university staff which was developed by Universities Australia in partnership with Our Watch, Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria, and several Centres Against Sexual Assault. The module, which is titled <i>Sexual harassment and sexual assault: What are the drivers and how can staff respond?</i> addresses the drivers of violence against women and provides advice on effective responses to disclosures. Work has been undertaken so that the module can be made available to Notre Dame staff within the University's learning management system.</p>	
<p>3</p> <p><i>Universities should ensure students and staff know about support services and reporting processes for sexual assault or sexual harassment</i></p>	<p>Information about support services and disclosure/reporting processes for sexual assault and sexual harassment continue to be widely disseminated to students and staff across the campuses – through in-person and online sessions delivered by Respect Officers and other staff at new student orientation and other occasions, information available on the University website (which is continually reviewed and improved), and through campus and electronic communications. Sessions for students and staff cover</p>	<p>The University will continue to widely disseminate information about support services and disclosure/reporting processes for sexual assault and sexual harassment, and for family and domestic violence. The information will</p>

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	<p>(amongst other things) University and external support services for students who have experienced sexual assault, sexual harassment, or family and domestic violence, the difference between making a disclosure and a formal report, University processes for disclosing and reporting, how to access support, and what happens to confidential information that is disclosed.</p> <p>The fulltime Respect Officer role on the Fremantle and Sydney campuses was heavily promoted to students and staff in late 2019 when the role commenced, leading to a significant increase in the number of students seeking support. The role of Respect Officer is also promoted to students and staff on the Broome campus.</p> <p>In August 2020, information for new staff was redeveloped as part of staff induction processes, to inform staff of what to do if they receive a disclosure or if they themselves are affected by sexual assault, sexual harassment, or family and domestic violence.</p> <p>Along with other Western Australian universities, Notre Dame contributed to the production of an information flyer for the Public Transport Authority of Western Australia in late 2019 / early 2020, so that WA transport staff know where to refer university students who have experienced or been affected by sexual assault or sexual harassment.</p>	<p>continue to be reviewed for ongoing improvement.</p> <p>In addition, the University has committed to the appointment of a fulltime, ongoing Respect Officer role on each of the Fremantle and Sydney campuses (in addition to an existing Aboriginal Respect Officer role on the Broome campus) to provide specialist support and advice for students who experience or are affected by sexual assault, sexual harassment or family and domestic violence.</p> <p>In order to support students who may be the subject of a sexual assault or sexual harassment complaint, the University is developing an information flyer for students titled 'What to do if a complaint of sexual assault or sexual harassment has been made against you' – in accordance with TEQSA's <i>Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual</i></p>

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		<i>harassment in the Australian higher education sector (July 2020).</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p><i>Within a year, universities should commission an independent, expert led review of existing university policies and response pathways in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment, to assess effectiveness and make specific recommendations to universities about best practice responses.</i></p>	<p>In March 2019, the University received a report by expert external reviewers (Code Black Threat Management) who were appointed to carry out an independent, expert-led review of the University’s existing policies and response pathways in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment, to assess their effectiveness and make specific recommendations about best practice responses. The independent reviewers carried out a wide-ranging review which involved not only consideration of documents but also visits to the University’s Fremantle and Sydney campuses and extensive in-person interviews with a range of University staff involved in the <i>Respect Now Always</i> initiative including members of the Vice Chancellor’s Advisory Committee for Addressing Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment on Campus, student residences staff, students, counselling staff, Respect Officers, senior legal counsel, security staff, international students staff, chaplaincy staff, Human Resources, appeals staff and others.</p> <p>The external reviewer’s report was broadly positive and made recommendations for further improving current practices. All the recommendations were accepted. Most have now been implemented, with a small number still in the process of being implemented, and the relevant areas are monitored for continuous improvement.</p>	<p>The areas addressed by the external reviewer’s report continue to be subject to internal review and continuous improvement.</p>

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<p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p><i>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 and ensure those identified receive appropriate training.</i></p>	<p>The University has a dedicated Respect Officer role on each campus, with responsibility for receiving disclosures and supporting students and staff who have experienced or are affected by sexual assault, sexual harassment, and family and domestic violence. However, as disclosures can be made to other staff or to students, the University has implemented extensive in-person and online training sessions (one hour each) for staff on what to do if staff receive a disclosure of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or family and domestic violence. A small number of student leaders have also received the training. The session covers what to say (and what not to say) if you receive a disclosure, in accordance with training and resources from specialist organisations such as Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia and the Full Stop Foundation, and how to respond to a disclosure in accordance with University procedures.</p>	<p>It is intended to continue with and expand this program of sessions for staff and student leaders. The content is subject to review for continuous improvement.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>In response to the <i>Change the course</i> report, in 2017 the University developed and implemented a Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Incident Disclosure Record and Checklist, to be completed each time a disclosure is received. In July 2019 the document was revised and improved based on experience and feedback received from students and staff.</p> <p>Internal processes for collecting, storing and reporting on disclosures and reports of sexual assault, sexual harassment and family and domestic</p>	<p>Continuous improvement in this area will continue to be implemented.</p>

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	<p>violence are continuously monitored and improvements are made on an ongoing basis, overseen by staff who have responsibility for reporting.</p> <p>The University has continued its practice of preparing a six-monthly report which includes de-identified disclosure and reporting data, the identification of any trends or identifiable concerns which may arise, and recommendations for any necessary improvements to process. The report is presented to the Advisory Committee, the Vice Chancellor, and the Board of Directors.</p>	
<p>7</p> <p><i>Within six months of this report, universities should conduct an audit of university counselling services to assess adequacy of capacity and training and undertake data collection.</i></p>	<p>University Respect Officers are encouraged to maintain close working relationships with University counsellors and to refer students internally for counselling where appropriate, and/or to liaise regarding referral to external services.</p> <p>A senior staff member in the University counselling service is a member of the Vice Chancellor’s Advisory Committee for Addressing Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment on Campus, which enables any concerns regarding counselling capacity, training etc to be raised directly with the Committee should such concerns arise.</p> <p>In response to the <i>Change the course</i> report, in 2017 an audit of the University counselling service was conducted to determine whether additional counselling services were required to meet the urgent needs of</p>	<p>The capacity of the University counselling service will continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis, to ensure that students who disclose sexual assault, sexual harassment, or family and domestic violence can generally be seen for an appointment the same day or within 24 hours.</p>

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	<p>students who have experienced sexual assault or harassment. At the time it was determined that there was sufficient capacity in the University counselling service, and this has been monitored on a continuing basis since then. The capacity of the counselling service is managed so that if a student wishes to see a University counsellor following a disclosure of sexual assault, sexual harassment or family and domestic violence, a student can generally be seen for an appointment the same day or within 24 hours.</p> <p>Sessions have been run with University counselling staff regarding University procedures counsellors are required to follow if a disclosure is received from a student, and how internal processes interact with counsellors' professional obligations.</p>	
<p>8</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>The University has been actively engaged in planning for Universities Australia's next national student survey of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Internal planning took place in 2019-2020, including staff from the Quality Management Office, Legal staff and senior managers involved in <i>Respect Now Always</i>, in preparation for the planned roll-out of the survey in September-October 2020. Following postponement of the survey by Universities Australia due to COVID-19, the University is currently working towards the revised survey date of late 2021.</p>	<p>The University will continue to prepare for Universities Australia's follow-up national student survey which is planned for late 2021.</p>

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	<p>Meanwhile, a range of staff within the University who are involved with the <i>Respect Now Always</i> initiative actively engage in workshops, symposia, training, online discussions through Basecamp with Universities Australia and other universities, and maintain informal networks for the purpose of sharing information and engaging in inter-university discussions regarding prevalence, responding, prevention and awareness work.</p>	
<p>9</p> <p><i>Residential colleges and university residences should consider implementing report recommendations, and commission an independent, expert-led review of the factors which contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings.</i></p>	<p>All University initiatives in relation to <i>Respect Now Always</i> have been implemented within University residences, which are fully owned and operated by the University. Residential staff and incoming residential students engage in workshops regarding sexual assault and sexual harassment, and responding pathways are promoted to residential students and staff.</p> <p>In considering Recommendation 9 of the <i>Change the Course</i> report, the Vice Chancellor’s Advisory Committee for Addressing Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment recommended in August 2019 that, as an externally-led review of the University’s student residences may not take place until 2021, the University should carry out its own internal review of the residences to consider factors which contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings. The Advisory Committee considered that a review of this nature would be appropriate taking into account the relatively small capacity and population of the student residences at Notre Dame when compared with other universities, the fact that the residences</p>	<p>An internal review of the University’s student residences, to consider factors which contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings, will recommence when appropriate. The review is currently on hold due to COVID-19.</p>

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	<p>are fully controlled and operated by the University, and noting that students who are accommodated in the University's residences generally stay for no longer than one semester meaning there is a high turnover of students. The Advisory Committee noted that due to these attributes, hazing practices and college 'traditions' that facilitate a culture which may increase the likelihood of sexual violence have not been a feature of the Notre Dame student residences.</p> <p>The Acting Vice Chancellor accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendation and in January 2020 approved terms of reference for an internal review of the University's student residences, to address the matters noted in Recommendation 9 of the <i>Change the Course</i> report.</p> <p>Implementation of the internal review commenced at the start of this year but was postponed in March 2020 due to COVID-19.</p>	