

University of Newcastle - 2020

Recommendation no.	Action taken since last milestone report in February 2019	Planned/future action
<p>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 University’s multi-disciplinary advisory group, the Sexual Misconduct Working Group (SMWG) continues to coordinate the University’s response to the recommendations of the AHRC report, and promotion of pro-social behaviours within our communities. The SMWG oversees implementation of the University’s action plan and monitors and evaluates related activities.</p> <p>The Behavioural Risk Group (BRG) coordinates management of specific complex cases, including allegations of sexual assault and harassment as well as identification and management of identified risks. The University Council receives an annual report on student conduct that includes aggregate data on incidents and outcomes.</p>	<p>The Behavioural Risk Group and University processes for managing student related conduct matters will be externally reviewed in Q4 2020.</p> <p>The University is working with students to develop a student-led communications and engagement strategy with areas of focus including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respectful communities and relationships - Healthy living and harm minimisation - Reporting and support for survivors of sexual assault and harassment
<p>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>The University’s SMWG Action Plan tracks progress against identified actions.</p> <p>Activities are organised in the following streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student Education and Awareness - Staff Education and Awareness - Frameworks, Policy and Processes - Residential Services <p>The Plan supports coordination and evaluation of the University’s approach.</p>	<p>The SMWG will continue to monitor implementation of the SMWG Action Plan and promote key initiatives.</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>The University has a single point of contact via Campus Care for the coordination of services and reporting processes for sexual assault and harassment. The University's website has been updated as a central gateway for information on identifying inappropriate and unacceptable behaviours, available support, and reporting pathways including FAQs and access to the online reporting portal.</p>	<p>The University will evaluate the updated website from a user experience perspective.</p>
<p>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 2019 the University invited representatives from End Rape on Campus to lead an on-campus workshop with staff to consider University policy, procedure and practice with the aim of improving understanding across the Institution, and outcomes for survivors/victims of Sexual Assault and Harassment.</p> <p>The University continues to review and develop policies to support a robust institutional response to the issue of sexual assault and harassment. A guideline outlining staff responsibilities and conflicts of interest is currently in development in alignment with TEQSA's Good Practice Note "Preventing and Responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector" (July 2020).</p>	<p>The University is working with students to seek formal feedback on University policy and procedure.</p>
<p>5</p> <p><i>Universities should conduct an assessment to identify staff members</i></p>	<p>Specialised training and support is offered to targeted staff, with other resources, including Epigeum's "Responding to Disclosures" course available to all staff across the</p>	<p>Develop a staff training framework including targeted training and the broad roll out of the online training "Sexual Harassment and sexual assault: What are the</p>

<p><i>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>University. This course will shortly be replaced with the APS “Sexual Harassment and sexual assault: What are the drivers and how can staff respond”. The University’s 5-step campaign to build confidence and capability amongst first responders continues to be supported and has been supplemented with new training for the “accidental counsellor”. Student staff and student leaders across the University are able to attend the Full Stop Foundation’s “Sex, Safety and Respect” workshops.</p> <p>All resources available to staff and students are available on the #noroomfor website and include: Accidental Counsellor, Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence, Cultural Competence, and ALLY training. A number of SBS Inclusion Modules are also available to staff including Understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Communities, Understanding LGPTIQ+ Committees, and the Culture Course.</p>	<p><i>drivers and how can staff respond”</i> which has been developed by the Australian Psychological Society in partnership with Universities Australia.</p> <p>Develop a staff communication framework to support engagement in training and enhanced awareness of support framework.</p>
<p>6 <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>The University developed a confidential reporting portal that is managed in line with a strict Records Management Policy that ensures a limited number of specialist support advisors have access to relevant details.</p> <p>Aggregated data is provided to specialist providers and the SMWG to support service process improvements.</p>	

<p>7 <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>An independent audit of University Counselling Services was concluded in July 2018.</p> <p>An independent review of the University’s health service was concluded in August 2020. The anticipated outcome will support increased coordination across the University’s support services.</p>	<p>In 2021 the University will implement the outcome of the Health Services Review.</p>
<p>8 <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 continues to support a proposed national response.</p>	
<p>9 <i>Residential colleges and university residences should consider implementing report recommendations, and commission an independent, expert-led</i></p>	<p>An independent review of residential colleges conducted in 2018 informed the targeted program of activities for residents to encourage and promote pro-social behaviours. This work is supported by the Student Living Health and Well-being Coordinator, who is clinical social worker, and includes the delivery education that encourages harm minimisation behaviours in relation to alcohol and other drugs, understanding what it means to be an ethical</p>	<p>A 2021 strategic initiative for Student Living Support is to continue to build upon current practices, with the promotion of gender equality and actively addressing the precursors of gender-based violence.</p>

<p><i>review of the factors which contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings.</i></p>	<p>bystander; and <i>Sex, Safety and Respect</i> workshops to all leaders in 2019, and 2020. It was also delivered to all new residents in 2020, with 650 residents completing this workshop to date. In addition, a team of Residential Mentors offer peer support in partnership with Student Living staff; and after-hours support is provided by a team of dedicated duty officers and security, while an after-hours crisis line is available to all students.</p> <p>The framework of incident management, conduct, student support and community building is based on Restorative Practices. This maintains a focus on accountability with specific emphasis on empathy and repairing of harm.</p>	
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