

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

University name: The University of Newcastle		
Recommendation no.	Action already taken	Planned/future action
1	<p>UON formed a multi-disciplinary advisory group – the Sexual Misconduct Working Group (SMWG) – in April 2017 to devise, progress and evaluate the success of UON Respect Now Always (RNA) action plan. Prior to the creation of the SMWG this work was performed by the Behaviour Risk Group (BRG). The BRG continues to monitor the effectiveness of the case management of specific and complex cases including sexual harassment and assault.</p> <p>The SMWG meets bi-monthly, is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching and includes representatives from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Student Support Services:</b> Counselling, Campus Care, Student Care and Equity, Dean of Students</li> <li>• <b>Residential services:</b> Representatives from the residence staff</li> <li>• <b>Policy and legal:</b> Assurance Services, HR, Legal</li> <li>• <b>Communications:</b> Student Communications, Marketing</li> <li>• <b>Specific student community support teams:</b> UON Global and Graduate Research and Wollotuka</li> <li>• <b>Safety:</b> Security, Health and Safety</li> <li>• <b>Student Representatives:</b> nominated by the student community</li> </ul>	<p>The working group continue to meet and retain a focus on evaluation and enhancement, as sufficient data is now available to assess completed actions.</p> <p>In the longer term the SMWG will focus on strategic long-term actions to reduce / eliminate incidents of sexual assault / harassment.</p>

	<p>The group reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor after each meeting as well as to the University Executive Committee and quarterly to University Council. The group also provides regular updates to the Student Union and Student Advisory Council.</p> <p>The group works closely with a variety of local specialist support services and other experts across the University. This includes both internal and external researchers, who have helped shape UON strategy and provide specialist leadership.</p> <p>The group also works closely with the UON Safety and Crime Consultative Group. This is a committee of service providers from across UON's campuses. The group includes representatives from senior University and student leaders, NSW Police, Transport for NSW, and Newcastle City Council.</p> <p>UON has provided a number updates internal and external stakeholders.</p>	
2	<p>UON introduced the Consent Matters course in 2016 to provide education about behaviours that constitute consent and respectful relationships. The course was developed using best-practice information from the UK, in consultation with university students. In 2017 this became a compulsory requirement for all students in UON residences. From Semester 1, 2018 all students are required to successfully complete and obtain 100% on the final test. Information is included in all student orientations programs with additional face-to-face sessions being compulsory for all students living within the residences.</p> <p>Residential Mentors are required to participate in a two-day face-to-face training prior to the start of each semester. Sessions this semester include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol and Drug training provided by a Drug and Alcohol Counsellor,</li> <li>• Experts from the Emergency Department, Hunter New England Health, and</li> </ul>	<p>In December 2018 UON has agreed to host the Full-Stop Foundation to train a set of academic and professional staff on 'Sex, Safety and Respect'. Once accredited, these staff will offer face-to-face courses to staff (first responders) and students across the University.</p> <p>The University will continue to work with local and national agencies to</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers from the Centre for Brain and Mental Health Priority Research Centre</li> </ul> <p>Staff in first responder positions have received specialist training in the last year from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CASA (Centre Against Sexual Assault) House,</li> <li>• Victims Services, and</li> <li>• The Office of the eSafety Commission</li> </ul> <p>Further training sessions are planned for later in 2018.</p> <p>All UON staff have been encouraged to complete the Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence course. Currently around 300 staff have done so. Approximately 10 staff face-to-face information sessions on the UON RNA work have been provided and were well attended by staff.</p> <p>The UON Student Communications team directs regular campaigns and information to students. Major campaigns commence during orientation and are backed up with supplementary material throughout the year. Special attention has been paid to the work of Student Clubs and Societies, many of them responding with the creation of their own action plans and behavioural expectations statements for integration into their club manuals.</p>	<p>provide informed support and training.</p> <p>UON will continue to evaluate and refine actions that are taken.</p>
3	<p>UON has created an extensive set of information resources, simplified processes and increased awareness of reporting opportunities as well as reviewed and enhanced many of its front-line services.</p> <p>UON has created a web-based reporting form and a mobile app to report behavioural concerns. This automatically integrates into UON's Campus Care reporting and</p>	<p>One year on, UON is undergoing an extensive review to enhance its existing student and staff engagement and communications materials</p>

	<p>support systems. <a href="https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/solving-issues/managing-allegations-of-sexually-based-assault-and-harassment">https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/solving-issues/managing-allegations-of-sexually-based-assault-and-harassment</a></p> <p>A single point of contact is used for reporting: Campus Care. Campus Care coordinates health care, academic and other support services to ensure students impacted by sexual misconduct are appropriately supported <a href="https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/solving-issues/campus-care">https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/solving-issues/campus-care</a>.</p> <p>This year UON has signed up to a 24-hour counselling service provided by Lifeline to supplement existing relationships with external service providers that inform our service response: <a href="https://uonblogs.newcastle.edu.au/counselling/sample-page/crisis/">https://uonblogs.newcastle.edu.au/counselling/sample-page/crisis/</a></p> <p>The University has close collaborations with a wide variety of specialist support services. These contacts are listed on UON information sheets and are brought to the attention of staff. They are specific to each of the UON's campuses and are also available for pick-up at student hubs. Examples can be found here: <a href="https://www.newcastle.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/379684/Concerning-behaviours-advice-and-contacts-Callaghan1.pdf">https://www.newcastle.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/379684/Concerning-behaviours-advice-and-contacts-Callaghan1.pdf</a></p> <p>In acknowledgment that research students often form a special classification of student that have strong associations to the role of academic staff, the UON Graduate Research team have been working closely with this cohort to develop specific resources to support these students.</p> <p>UON offers a free interpreter service for international students.</p> <p>UON has updated its askUON student online enquiry system to include information about support for and reporting of incidents of sexual assault and harassment: <a href="https://askuon.newcastle.edu.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/2094/kw/sexual%20assault">https://askuon.newcastle.edu.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/2094/kw/sexual%20assault</a></p>	<p>based on lessons learned in the last 12 months.</p>
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4	<p>UON reviewed and updated the procedure for reporting cases of sexual misconduct in July 2017. Gaps and enhancements identified have been actioned over the last year.</p> <p>The UON has recently established a new Counselling triage service provided by a group of mental health nurses. This ensures that students in need are typically seen within a working day. An external review of the service conducted in December 2017 indicated that students in need were able to obtain appointments within a working day. All services are offered without cost.</p> <p>UON has created a new policy and procedure for dealing with Sexual Misconduct.  <a href="https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=36">https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=36</a>  <a href="https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=44">https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=44</a></p> <p>The above policies complement other documents in UON's policy framework, including the Student Conduct Rule, which guides consideration and management of all student conduct issues. The Conduct Rule was implemented in January 2016 and is scheduled for independent review in the coming year.</p> <p>Broad consultation led by a consultant to UON has resulted in the creation of new guidelines on Staff-Student Interaction. These guidelines have involved significant</p>	<p>UON will conduct an external review of the Student Conduct Rule. This will be actioned in 2018/19, and required updates will be progressed after review by UON's Legal Unit.</p>

	<p>engagement and consultation with the broad University community including the staff and student unions. Reviews have also been extensive and included presentation and discussion across the UON's high-level committees including: Executive Committee, Academic Senate, Learning and Teaching, Research Committee and Faculty Boards. The Guidelines have been approved by the University Executive Committee and noted by the University Council.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>UON has identified those staff who are most likely to receive disclosures.</p> <p>A set of targeted campaigns have been launched in the last year to increase staff awareness and understanding of best practice in receiving disclosures. This includes the promotion of the Epigeum's Responding the Disclosures course which has been actively promoted to these staff.</p> <p>The University is using a 5-step campaign for first responders to help them understand their responsibilities and build confidence.</p> <div data-bbox="488 957 1601 1228" data-label="Diagram"> <p><b>Find an appropriate space</b>      <b>Establish Safety</b>      <b>Listen and show empathy</b>      <b>Provide support options</b>      <b>Practice self-care</b></p> </div>	<p>UON will continue to offer a range of training and enhanced support materials for first responders. This includes a broad range of training opportunities for all staff across the University.</p>

	Over 100 staff in first responder positions have received specialist face-to-face training from CASA House in December 2017. Residential mentors receive training each semester.	
6	<p>Records are kept in accordance with UON's Records Management Policy with student reports only accessible to a limited group of specialist support advisors. Overview reports are provided to senior executive, including the Vice-Chancellor and University Council.</p> <p>Aggregated reports are maintained to track processing and waiting times.</p> <p>Complaint handling processes were reviewed during the year. Staff involved in receiving complaints through UON's Complaint Handling processes undertook training. Processes for review processes and outcomes are maintained in accordance with UON's Records Management Policy and remain confidential and reported to senior executive, including the Vice-Chancellor and University Council. Complaints review processes are undertaken within reasonable timeframes.</p> <p>Wait times for Counselling are regularly assessed and reported.</p>	<p>UON will continue to monitor evaluate support service and to work with other institutions to ensure that we engage with sharing and adopting best practice approaches.</p> <p>The complaint handling processes continue to be reviewed to support effective and timely reviews.</p>
7	An independent review of the UON Counselling service processes was conducted by external experts from the University of Wollongong. This review commenced in December 2017 with the final report provided in July 2018. The review confirmed that the UON is able to offer timely counselling to survivor/victims and that it has made good progress implementing the AHRC recommendations.	The University is currently reviewing the report and will consider the most appropriate actions arising from the report.

	<p>The final report has been considered by the SMWG and an action plan is being developed.</p> <p>UON's Counselling service introduced a new data collection and reporting tool in 2017, which has helped support its reporting requirements.</p> <p>All University Counselling staff have received specialist training for sexual assault and harassment. The UON also has specialist drug and alcohol services.</p>	
8	<p>A national response is required for this item. The UON is entirely supportive of this recommendation.</p>	
9	<p>UON directly manages all of its residential colleges and therefore is in a position to directly implement action plans and manage and oversee cultural change.</p> <p>UON has an active residential program to support student social and academic development. UON recognises that ongoing work is needed to ensure that residences offer safe and respectful communities.</p> <p>A review of UON residences was completed by an external consultant in 2018. The review, titled 'UON Check-in: residential colleges, and student and Sporting Clubs', ran from 16 May – 5 June 2018, and comprised focus groups and interviews with students in these communities, as well as an online survey of residents. In total, 22 interviews were conducted, six focus groups were attended by 37 people, and 511 residents completed the survey.</p> <p>The report included a set of recommendations for the residential colleges, which aim to improve respectful and safe behaviours by enhancing education and awareness in key areas, and build on existing assets such as community cohesion. The report</p>	<p>The University will conduct a further independent Check-in with particular focus on sporting clubs.</p> <p>UON will agree the frequency in which these Check-ins will be conducted in future in order to effectively examine the impact of UON's strategies and actions.</p>



	<p>noted there is also an opportunity to build a stronger relationship between University leadership and residential staff.</p> <p>The final report and action plan were presented to UON's Executive Committee in July 2018 and both documents were fully endorsed. UON is in the process of briefing residents, student representatives, and sporting clubs on the outcomes of this report, which will be made available on the website.</p>	
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