2024

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Annual Report *on Sexual Misconduct*

Content disclaimer

This report contains information about sexual assault and sexual harassment which you may find distressing. If you would like to speak to someone for support, please contact the internal or external supports listed on this page.

University of Sydney Safer Communities Office
Available Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm
Phone: +61 2 8627 6808 or
1800 SYD HLP (1800 793 457)
Email: safer-communities.officer@sydney.edu.au
Website: **sydney.edu.au/about-us/vision-and-values/safety-and-respect/sexual-misconduct.html**

University of Sydney Mental Wellbeing Support Line
(for currently enrolled students)
Available 24/7
Phone: 1300 474 065
Text: +61 488 884 429

University of Sydney Employee Assistance Program
(for staff and their immediate family members).
Available 24/7
Phone: 1300 687 327
Book online **www.convergeinternational.com.au**

NSW Sexual Violence Helpline
Phone: 1800 385 578
Website: **www.fullstop.org.au**

1800 Respect - National Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Counselling Service
Available 24/7
Phone: 1800 737 732
Website: **www.1800respect.org.au**

Beyond Blue
Phone: 1300 22 4636
Website: **www.beyondblue.org.au**

About this report

Defining our commitments to a safer community

The term **sexual misconduct** is used in this report to cover a range of unacceptable sexual behaviours that are in breach of University codes of conduct and policies, including **sexual assault** and **sexual harassment**. In line with the wider community's understanding of the term, we use **sexual assault** to describe non-consensual sexual intercourse, oral sex, and sexual touching. Other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including the recording or distributing of intimate images, is reported as **sexual harassment**.

The term **victim-survivor** is used in this report to describe people who have experienced sexual misconduct, acknowledging those with lived experience of the ongoing impact of trauma, while also recognising their strength and resilience.

Types of sexual misconduct reports the University receives

A report of sexual misconduct refers to a **disclosure** or **complaint** of sexual misconduct that has been received by the University, whether it relates to University related or non-University related conduct.

A **disclosure** is a report of sexual misconduct by a person who might be seeking support but does not want the University to investigate or take any specific action in response to the incident.

A **complaint** is a report of sexual misconduct by a person who wants the University to investigate or to take specific action in response to the incident.

The statistics published in this report include **University related** and **non-University related** incidents of sexual misconduct. **University related** sexual misconduct is conduct that is connected to the University, such as conduct that occurs at or in connection with a University campus, accommodation, residential college or event (whether sanctioned or organised by the University or not), including events run by or affiliated with student clubs and societies. **Non-University related** conduct has no connection to the University but may be reported by a student or staff member seeking trauma-informed care and support. The University is unable to investigate non-University related conduct and it cannot be the subject of a complaint.

Please refer to the Glossary on pages 27-28 for an explanation of other terms used in this report.

Summary and reflections

This is the third Annual Report on Sexual Misconduct published by the University of Sydney. The University of Sydney is committed to publishing a report on sexual misconduct annually.

This report illustrates the University's commitment to promoting transparency and accountability in its approaches to preventing and responding to sexual misconduct. It includes information about the University's preventative education programs, initiatives, support services and outcomes of complaints.

The University provides expert and timely trauma-informed support to all members of the community. Please see pages 6-7 for more detailed information.

In 2024, the University received **231** reports of sexual misconduct (compared to 246 in 2023 and 121 in 2022). There were 22 reports of University related sexual assault, 95 reports of University related sexual harassment, and two University related reports with insufficient detail disclosed by the reporter to categorise the type of conduct (119 in total). Of the remaining 112 reports, 85 were non-University related and the remaining 27 were categorised as unknown due to insufficient information being disclosed. Of the total 231 reports, 176 were classified as disclosures and 55 as complaints. Please see pages 10-18.

When reflecting on these figures, it is important to acknowledge that sexual misconduct in our universities and broader community has historically been underreported. By creating safe, visible reporting pathways and providing timely and comprehensive supports, we build greater trust and confidence for victim-survivor reporting and generate greater awareness of these significant issues across our community.

Acknowledgements

The University of Sydney's campuses and facilities sit on the ancestral lands of many of Australia's First Nations peoples, who have for thousands of generations exchanged knowledge for the benefit of all. These include the Gadigal, Gamaraygal, Dharug, Wangal, Tharawal, Deerabbin, Darkinyung, Guringgai, Gamilaraay, Barkindji, Bundjalung, Wiradjuri, Wiljali, Ngunawal, Gureng Gureng and Gagudju peoples.
We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.
In respectfully acknowledging the ancient learning cultures and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the University of Sydney declares its commitment to the continuation of this sharing through the agency of our work.

In acknowledging Country, we call for a reflection on the unique reality of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their lived experiences.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

We also acknowledge the strength and resilience of victim-survivors who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment. We acknowledge that although anyone can experience sexual assault or sexual harassment, it is disproportionately experienced by women, people who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and those with lived experience of disability. The root cause of this stems from societal attitudes and power imbalances. We acknowledge and applaud the courage of those who have come forward to speak to staff at the University and seek support, and those who have not. We also acknowledge and applaud the courage of anyone with lived experience of sexual assault or sexual harassment who continues to recover from the impacts of trauma. We acknowledge the important role we must play in the prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

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Introduction

This is the University of Sydney's third Annual Report on Sexual Misconduct, underscoring our unwavering dedication to transparency and accountability in addressing sexual misconduct within our community. While this report details the progress we have made in fostering a safer and more respectful environment for all members of our University of Sydney community, we acknowledge there is still much more to be done.

We acknowledge the strength and courage of those who have come forward to speak to staff at the University and seek support, and those who have not. We also acknowledge the profound impact that sexual misconduct has on our University community.

As a University, our priority continues to be to create a safe and inclusive environment where anyone can report incidents regardless of when and where this has occurred. In 2024, we continued to reflect on opportunities to listen to victim-survivors' voices and reduce barriers to access to support for vulnerable groups, as demonstrated by the establishment of a partnership with The Survivor Hub. In July 2024, the Safer Communities Office introduced an additional entry point to the service, promoted as a confidential chat with support staff. This included the ability to book on-demand appointments. This significantly improved both accessibility and trust within our community.

As a University, we are committed to providing education, safety and support with compassion, transparency and confidentiality. In 2024, the University responded to feedback from students and staff to implement more targeted initiatives to reflect the needs of our community. Initiatives were peer co-designed and/or co-facilitated and were developed to foster a culture of empowerment and respect centred around the voices of the University's students, staff and affiliates. An example is the newly designed Respect@Sydney online consent education module. We thank our students and staff who have generously shared their time and knowledge to contribute towards our wide range of preventative education initiatives, including our co-designed consent education module, Respect@Sydney, and peer facilitation in workshops.

We understand the importance of continuous improvement and believe that our commitment to the publishing of an annual report on sexual misconduct will improve visibility for our community. The **2023 Annual Report on Sexual Misconduct** was published in August 2024, and this was closely followed by our launch of **Strategic Actions for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Misconduct 2024-2026 (pdf, 215KB)**. The latter outlines a whole of institution approach for targeted action to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for the University.

We recognise that meaningful change is achieved through collaboration with other community organisations and stakeholders, and we remain dedicated to these partnerships in our ongoing efforts. In 2024, The University hosted the two events: 'Courageous Conversations' and Our Watch "Walking, Talking and Working Together – Taking a whole of university approach to preventing gender-based violence". Both events were held on campus and included Grace Tame as a keynote speaker (Courageous Conversations) and representatives from other Australian universities, Our Watch, and other organisations across the gendered violence space. The University also sponsored the USU Student Safety Conference which aimed to address the issues related to sexual misconduct across Australian University Campuses.

These initiatives aimed to foster open dialogues on consent, sexual harassment, and sexual assault, focusing on preventing gender-based violence in universities. They also promoted supporting change across organisations, educating for equality, activating men as allies, and implementing the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence, which was tabled in Parliament in February 2025. The events highlighted the ongoing collaboration between Australian universities to ensure safe campuses and communities.

As we reflect on the past year and look ahead, we acknowledge that there are ripple effects from the impacts of sexual misconduct across our community. We remain dedicated to transparency, accountability, and ensuring everyone feels safe in reporting concerns. Acknowledging the need for continued progress, we are committed to addressing the inequalities and power imbalances that contribute to sexual misconduct. Our ongoing work in this area will be shared in future annual reports.

Professor Mark Scott AO
Vice-Chancellor and President

Professor Annamarie Jagose
Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost

Professor Joanne Wright
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Trauma-informed care and support model

The Safer Communities Office

Established in 2017, this office provides trauma-informed case management and support to victim-survivors of sexual misconduct, domestic and family violence, bullying and harassment, and issues relating to modern slavery. Case managers provide practical support to help each victim-survivor identify and achieve their personal goals. Students are able to book confidential consultations, with all referrals responded to within 24 hours.

Team members have a range of professional experience, with backgrounds in social work, counselling and case management. The team offers timely support to current and former students, staff and affiliates.

Student respondents can receive case management support from the University's Wellbeing Services team, and staff respondents through the University's Employee Assistance Program and Staff Support Services.

The Safer Communities Office currently has eight staff:

- Manager
- Team Leader
- Preventative Education Coordinator
- Prevention Education Specialist
- Four FTE Student Liaison Officers (including two Mandarin-speaking Student Liaison Officers)

Trauma-informed care and support journey

The Safer Communities Office (SCO) provides confidential and free support. The SCO works with but is independent of other departments and faculties at the University. The support process is guided by victim-survivors, who choose how much information they wish to disclose and share. Underpinning this support are the principles of trauma-informed practice which prioritises safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment.

A University-wide approach is taken to ensure that victim-survivors are offered specialist support that is led by them. Regardless of who a victim-survivor chooses to approach, they are offered specialist support through the Safer Communities Office. The SCO works with many teams across the University including Student Life, the Student Affairs Unit, Human Resources, and Protective Services to ensure that the safety of each victim-survivor is prioritised.

Figure 13 illustrates the support journey that begins when a victim-survivor is referred to the SCO.

Referrals

Victim-survivors can either make their own reports, be referred to by University staff or other third party through a number of channels, including the University's Sexual Misconduct Online Reporting Form, by email, by phone or in person.

Initial meeting

Specialist staff from the Safer Communities Office (SCO) provides trauma-informed case management and support to victim-survivors of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault and sexual harassment, whether recent or historical).

Provide one-on-one services tailored to each victim-survivor's wishes and needs, to ensure they receive appropriate support.

Co-developed support plan

A support plan will be co-developed, which could include assistance and support with safety planning, reporting options (see below), navigating academic or workplace processes, and being linked with appropriate counselling, financial, healthcare, accommodation and legal services.

Making a disclosure (optional):

A victim-survivor can receive support through the SCO by making a disclosure. The victim-survivor can provide as much or as little information as they feel comfortable with, e.g. they can choose to identify themselves or remain anonymous. If it relates to University related conduct, a victim-survivor can decide to change their disclosure to a complaint at any time.

Making a complaint (optional):

The SCO can support a victim-survivor to make an internal complaint to the Student Affairs Unit (for students) or Workplace Relations (for staff) or an external complaint (e.g. assistance with visiting a NSW Police station or completing the NSW Police Sexual Assault Reporting Option form), where applicable. Led by the victim-survivor, the SCO can be listed as the preferred key contact, minimising the need for the victim-survivor to retell their experience.

Case management

SCO staff work with the victim-survivor until their case management goals are met.

Figure 13: A victim-survivor's journey through the Safer Communities Office

Snapshot of 2024

28,528

students completed the online Consent Matters module and Responding to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Training for Student Leaders online module as part of the Student Leadership Co-Design Training Program.

3888

staff completed Respect in Our Community - preventing bullying and harassment module.

332

priority sexual assault counselling appointments offered, as part of the outreach clinic partnership between the University and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

231

total reports of sexual misconduct were received.

176

victim-survivors and bystanders sought support for sexual misconduct from the Safer Communities Office.

119

reports were University related.

84

number of reports that were non-University related.

28

number of reports that were categorised as “unknown” due to insufficient information being provided by the reporter.

Governance and leadership

Strategic Actions for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Misconduct 2024-2026

In August 2024, the University launched its Strategic Actions for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Misconduct 2024-2026 outlining a whole of institution approach for targeted action to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for the University community.

The Strategic Actions are led by the University's Safer Communities Office and based on consultations with our key stakeholders, including students and staff. These initiatives were endorsed by the University Executive's People and Culture Committee in August 2024.

1. Implement an evidence-based, trauma-informed approach to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct throughout our diverse student cohorts and aligned with the National Higher Education Code's key focus areas.
2. Embed trauma-informed and victim-survivor-led practices.
3. Acknowledge and address intersectionality in awareness raising, prevention and response initiatives.
4. Promote accountability, transparency and continuous improvement through reporting, monitoring, and evaluation.
5. Engage in collaborative, consultative and co-designed initiatives with stakeholders across the University.
6. Partner with survivors, NGOs, government, and community organisations to co-design and evaluate effectiveness of prevention programs.
7. Use research, evidence, and best practice to develop awareness raising, prevention and response strategies.

Safer Communities Advisory Group

The Safer Communities Advisory Group provides stakeholder input on the University's initiatives related to sexual misconduct, domestic and family violence. It reports to the UE People and Culture Committee and was chaired in 2024 by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Life). Members included representatives from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, Student Affairs, Heads of College, Sydney University Sport (SUS), University of Sydney Union (USU), Student Representative Council (SRC), and Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA).

In 2024, the group met five times (including one extraordinary meeting), focusing on enhancing collaboration between the Safer Communities Office and key student bodies. This included collaborating on events, developing consent education modules, and raising awareness of support and reporting options.

The University Senate oversees related policies and initiatives, including the initial approval of establishment of the Safer Communities Office as a specialist support function with the aim of fostering a safer campus environment.

SAGE Cygnet Award 2024

The University of Sydney received five SAGE Cygnet Awards for its leadership in equity, diversity, and inclusion. One award recognised its efforts in fostering a safer community through the sexual misconduct and inappropriate behaviour online reporting form.

Key initiatives included:

- enhancing understanding of inappropriate behaviour via revised inclusion training.
- strengthening reporting mechanisms, increasing transparency, and increased knowledge and awareness of support and reporting options.

Discussion groups highlighted significant progress in service provision, with some areas identified for further improvement.

2024 reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment

Each and every one in our community has the right to feel safe and respected, and be supported with compassion to report incidents, regardless of where and when they occur.

The University provides support to current and former students, staff and affiliates who have experienced University related or non–University related incidents of sexual misconduct.

Reports of sexual misconduct include both disclosures and complaints. A disclosure is a report of sexual misconduct by a person who does not want the University to investigate or to take any specific action in response to the incident but may be seeking trauma-informed support. A complaint is a report of University related sexual misconduct by a person who wants the University to investigate or to take specific action in response to the incident.

The data for complaints outcomes captures complaints received within 2024 that reached outcomes within 2024. Complaints received in 2024 that did not reach an outcome within 2024 are listed as “ongoing” and will be reported in the 2025 annual report. For complaints that were received in 2023 and were listed as “ongoing” on the 2023 annual report, their outcomes have been listed in the complaints section of this report.

Due to the small numbers within subcategories and the unique nature of each incident, caution should be exercised in drawing wider conclusions from these figures.

Definitions of these terms are provided in the Glossary pages 27-28. Non–University related conduct can include domestic violence, child sexual abuse, and incidents that happened overseas or before the victim-survivor was a student, staff member or affiliate of the University.

Please note the data included in this annual report was obtained in 2024 from multiple systems across the University and cross-checked to avoid duplication. While most reports of sexual misconduct are received by the Safer Communities Office, many are made to other areas of the University.

Total reports received in 2024

In 2024, the University received a total of 231 reports of sexual misconduct. This is a 6% decrease from 2023, when there were 246 reports. The 231 reports include both complaints and disclosures (see **Figure 1**), with most reports being disclosures. A total of 176 students and staff received trauma-informed case management support from the Safer Communities Office. Please note that five students were returning for support from reporting incidents occurring in 2023.

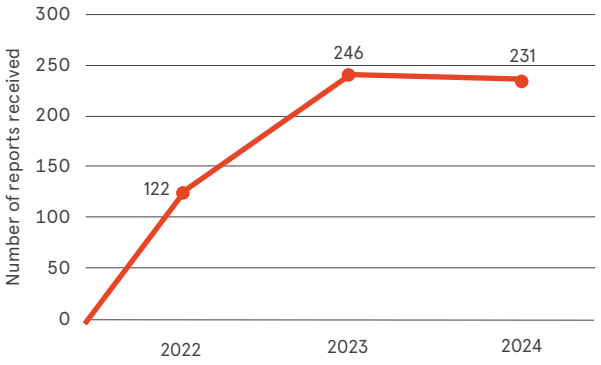

Figure 1: Year on year comparison of total number of reports of sexual misconduct received (includes disclosures and complaints)

As indicated in **Figure 2**, of the total 231 reports received in 2024:

- 84 (36%) were categorised as non-University related conduct, of which:
  - 68 related to sexual assault
  - 16 related to sexual harassment
- 119 (52%) were categorised as University related conduct, of which:
  - 22 related to sexual assault
  - 95 related to sexual harassment
  - 2 were categorised as "unknown" due to insufficient information being provided.
- 28 (12%) were categorised as "unknown" connection to the University, due to insufficient information being provided by the reporter
  - 16 related to sexual assault
  - 11 related to sexual harassment
  - 1 was classified as "unknown" due to insufficient information being provided

Note: Where victim-survivors disclosed that they had experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment, without further details of the incidents being provided, the incident has been classified according to their own description of the conduct. Where the victim-survivor reported experiencing both sexual assault and sexual harassment, the incident was categorised as sexual assault.

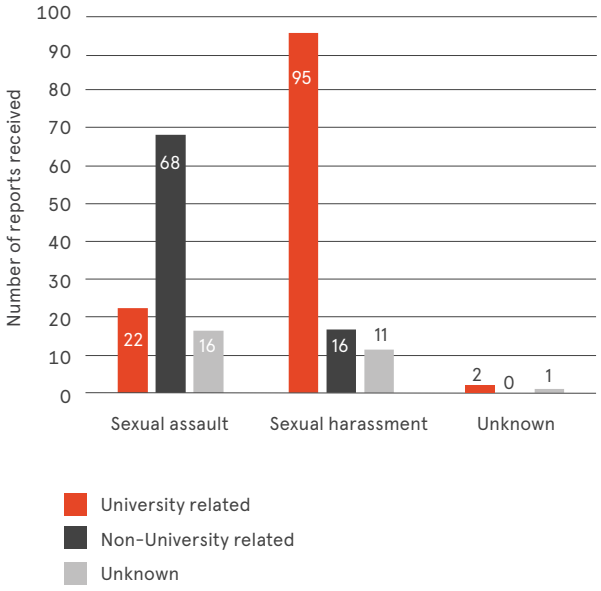

Figure 2: Number of reports of University related and non-University related sexual assault and sexual harassment (including disclosures and complaints) in 2024

In 2024, of the total reports received, 176 (76%) were disclosures and 55 (24%) were complaints, (see **Figure 3**). This is a 7% increase in the ratio of complaints to disclosures compared to 2023, which may be attributed to increased confidence in the University's complaint-handling processes and to a greater number of bystander complaints. In 2023, there were 217 (83%) disclosures and 45 (17%) complaints.

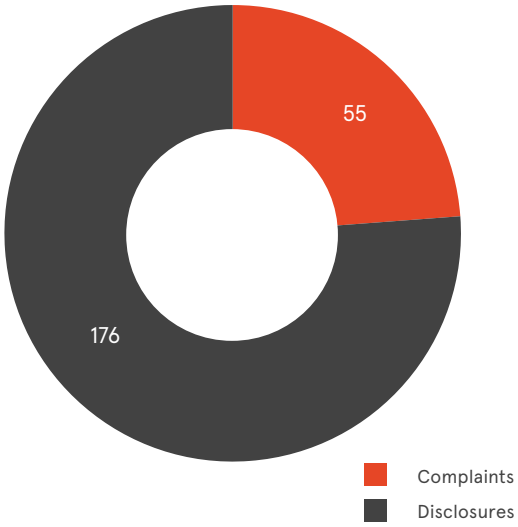

Figure 3: Total number of complaints and disclosures received, 2024

Of the total reports of sexual misconduct, 14 victim-survivors had reported the incident to the police in the country or state where it had occurred.

The comparatively higher proportion of disclosures overall can be attributed partly to the fact that 79 disclosures (45.5 %) involved non-University related conduct, which cannot form the basis of a complaint.

Of the total 231 reports received in 2024, the reporter's connection to the University was as below (see **Figure 4**):

- 169 (73.2%) were current students
- 3 (1.3%) were former students
- 27 (11.7%) were current or former staff
- 9 (3.9%) were members of the public
- 23 (9.9%) were unknown (the victim-survivor did not wish to identify their connection to the University)

Noting that there has been an increase in the number of disclosures and complaints related to staff conduct, we will, as part of our Respect@Work Action Plan, be developing in-person staff training and reviewing our Respect in our Community online module. This will be done in consultation with key stakeholders, to identify knowledge gaps and encourage active bystander intervention and reporting.

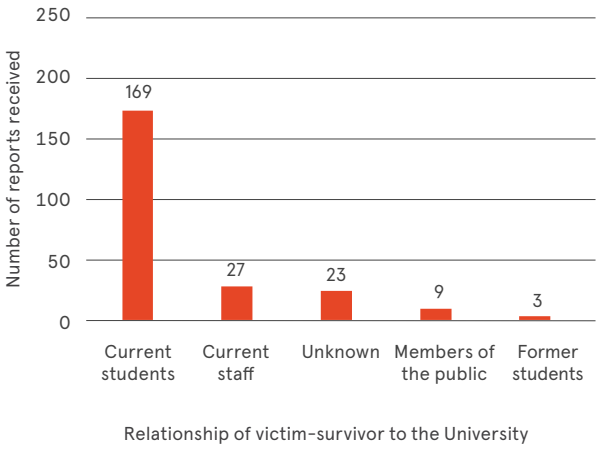

Figure 4: Reporter's connection to the University for total reports (including disclosures and complaints 2024)

Of the total 172 reports of sexual misconduct received from current and former students, 74 were domestic students (43%), 64 were international students (37%), and 34 were unknown due to insufficient information being provided by the reporter (20%) (see **Figure 5**).

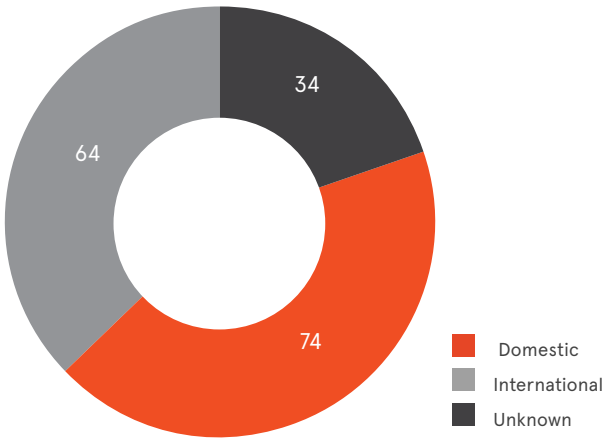

Figure 5: Domestic or international student status

Disclosures of sexual misconduct

For the purposes of this report, and in accordance with the University's staff and student sexual misconduct policies and response procedures, a 'disclosure' is a report of sexual misconduct made to the University by a victim-survivor or bystander who wishes to make the University aware of an incident but does not wish the University to investigate or take any specific action in response to the incident. A person who provides a disclosure to the University has the option of receiving trauma-informed case management support from the Safer Communities Office (see **Figure 1**).

A person who makes a disclosure may choose later to make a complaint to the University about the same incident, provided that the incident involved University related conduct. (For the definition of University related conduct, see the Glossary on page 28).

Due to the small numbers within subcategories and the unique nature of each incident, caution should be exercised in drawing wider conclusions from these figures.

Of the 176 disclosures (see **Figure 6**):

- 73 (41.5%) involved University related conduct,
- 79 (44.9%) involved non-University related conduct,
- 24 (13.6%) were categorised as unknown. due to insufficient information being disclosed by the reporter.

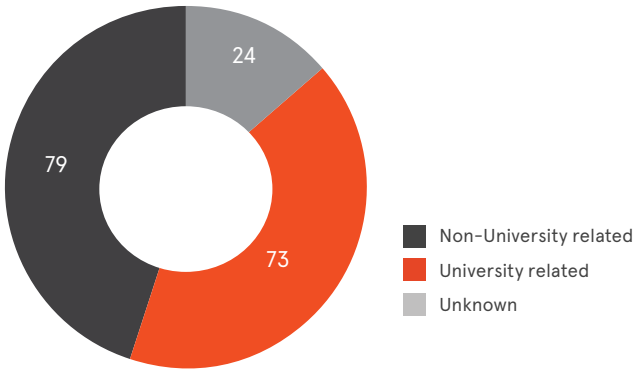

Figure 6: Disclosures by Incident Type – University related and non-University related 2024

Of these 176 disclosures:

- 98 (55.7%) were categorised as sexual assault,
- 75 (42.6%) were categorised as sexual harassment,
- 3 (1.7%) were categorised as unknown due to insufficient information being disclosed by the reporter.

As indicated in **Figure 7**:

- 18 (18.4%) of the 98 disclosures categorised as sexual assault involved University related conduct, 66 (67.3%) involved non-University related conduct, and 14 (14.3%) were categorised as unknown due to insufficient information being disclosed by the reporter. Of the 18 disclosures categorised as sexual assault involving University related conduct, 7 reportedly occurred in University-owned or affiliated student accommodation.
- 53 (70.7%) of the 75 disclosures categorised as sexual harassment involved University related conduct, 13 (17.3%) involved non-University related conduct, and 9 (12%) were categorised as unknown due to insufficient information being disclosed by the reporter. Of the 53 disclosures categorised as sexual harassment involving University related conduct, 3 reportedly occurred in University-owned or affiliated student accommodation.

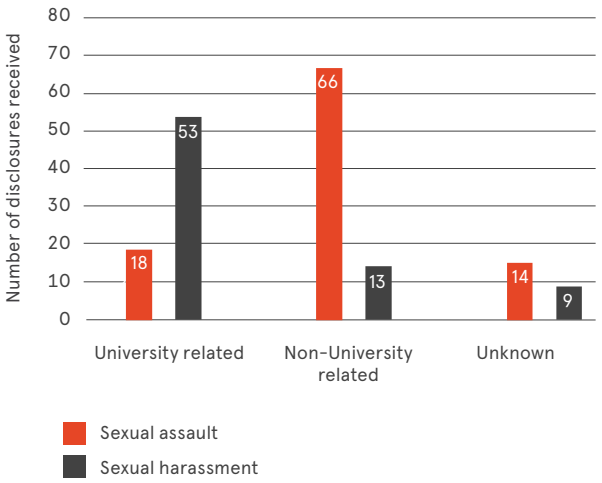

Figure 7: Total number of sexual assault and sexual harassment disclosures received, 2024

As indicated in **Figure 8**, of the 176 total disclosures, the respondent's reported connection to the University was as follows:

- 48 (27.3%) were current or former students,
- 26 (14.8%) were current or former staff or affiliates,
- 54 (30.7%) were members of the public (including historical reports and overseas reports),
- 48 (27.2%) were unknown persons (where the connection of the respondent to the University was unknown, either because it was not disclosed or because the respondent was a person unknown to the reporter).

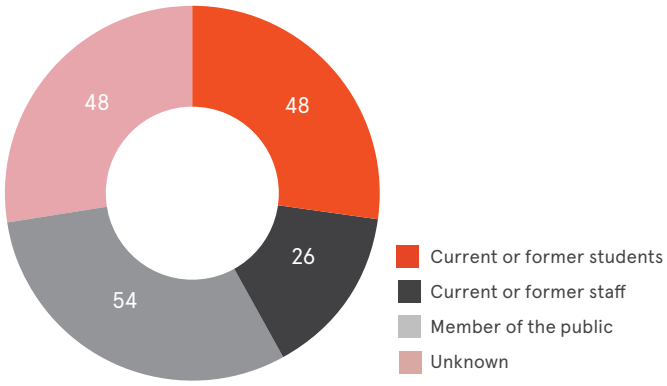

Figure 8: Disclosures received: Connection of respondent to the University, 2024

Complaints of sexual misconduct

A complaint is a report of sexual misconduct made by a victim-survivor or bystander who wishes the University to investigate and/or take specific action in response to an incident involving University-related conduct. See the Appendix for information regarding the University's Complaint-Handling Process.

The Student Affairs Unit (SAU) handles student-related complaints of sexual misconduct. All complaints received by the SAU are assessed under the Student Complaints Procedures and resolved in accordance with the Resolution of Complaints Policy, the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy and Student Sexual Misconduct Response Procedures. Complaints relating to alleged misconduct will be considered and progressed under the University of Sydney (Student Discipline) Rule if they meet the threshold for misconduct. Staff sexual misconduct complaints are handled by Workplace Relations (within Human Resources) in accordance with the Staff Sexual Misconduct Policy, Staff Sexual Misconduct Response Procedures and, where appropriate, the University's Enterprise Agreement. See Appendix on page 29 for a flowchart of the University's complaint-handling processes.

A victim-survivor who makes a disclosure to the University may choose to make a complaint to the University about the same incident later, provided that the incident is University related. (For the definition of University-related conduct, see the Glossary on page 28).

When complaints are received, the Student Affairs Unit and Workplace Relations team works with reporters to refer them to the Safer Communities Office for trauma-informed case management. Taking up this support is always the reporter's choice and they can also choose to receive support from the Safer Communities Office at a later stage.

Of the total 231 reports of sexual misconduct received in 2024, 55 were complaints. This is an increase of 83.3% from the 30 complaints received in 2023, and a 139% increase compared to 23 complaints received in 2022 (see **Figure 9**). Several factors can be attributed to this increase including:

- a welcome increase in bystander complaints; and
- increased confidence in the University's complaint-handling processes due to expansion in the delivery of prevention and awareness programs and improved training for key staff. SCO, SAU and Workplace Relations staff have been trained to carefully explain all available options, including the potential benefits and down-sides of a trauma informed complaints process, so that victim-survivors are fully informed and have agency when making a decision about how they would like the incident to be resolved.

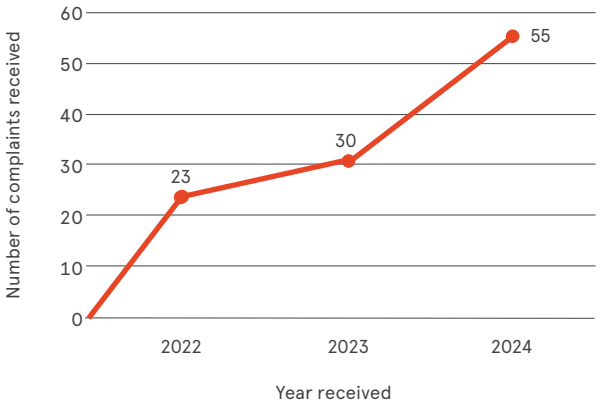

Figure 9: Year on year comparison, total complaints

Of the total 55 complaints, 38 were victim-survivor led, 10 were complaints lodged by bystanders, and the remaining 7 were initiated by the University due to concerns about student or staff safety.

The average length of time to resolve a complaint for those reports received during 2024 (excluding cases which were ongoing as of 31 December 2024) was 48 business days for complaints regarding students and 73 business days for complaints regarding staff. The longer timeframe for resolving staff complaints is due in part to the additional complexity associated with processes under the University's Enterprise Agreement, as well as staff absences and limited availability of witnesses. Timeframes have also been impacted in some cases by indecision or delays on the part of the complainant. In all matters, the University's complaints resolution processes prioritise and respect the wishes of the victim-survivor, who will often need time and space to consider and seek advice on their options before indicating their preference for a particular resolution pathway

Of the 55 complaints received in 2024: (see **Figure 10**)

- 8 (14.5%) were categorised as sexual assault,
- 47 (85.5%) were categorised as sexual harassment (including the 10 bystander complaints).

As indicated in **Figure 10**, of the 55 complaints received, 35 of the complainants were current students, 7 were current staff, 10 were anonymous with an unknown connection to the University, and 3 were members of the public.

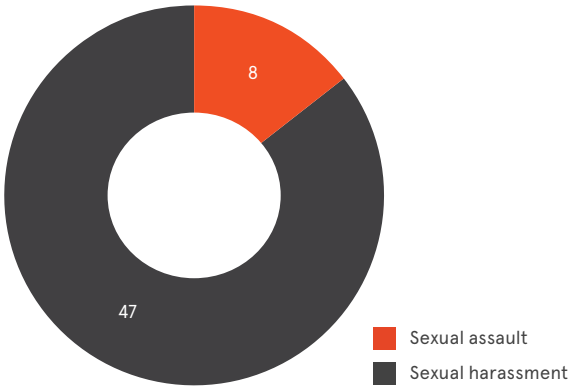

Figure 10: Total number of sexual assault and sexual harassment complaints received, 2024

This section details the University's response to these 55 complaints of sexual misconduct.

In response to two complaints, interim measures were imposed by the Registrar (for students) or authorised delegate (for staff). Interim measures are implemented on a temporary basis where there are concerns for the safety of the complainant or other member(s) of the University community while the complaint is being resolved or investigated. Where the relevant complaints team has been informed that there is an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) in place, interim measures will mirror the AVO conditions.

Of the 55 complaints, 5 (9.1%) were categorised as non-University related. A further 4 (7.3%) complaints were categorised as unknown, where it was unable to be determined if the conduct was University related or not because there was insufficient detail about the complaint. Of those 4 complaints, 2 (3.6%) were withdrawn by the complainant, 1 (1.8%) was unsubstantiated, and 1 (1.8%) remains ongoing.

Of the 46 (83.6%) complaints that were categorised as University related sexual misconduct, 2 (3.6%) cases did not meet the threshold for progression under the University's sexual misconduct policies.

Of the 46 complaints that were categorised as University related:

- 4 (8.7%) were categorised as sexual assault,
- 42 (91.3%) were categorised as sexual harassment (including the 10 bystander complaints).

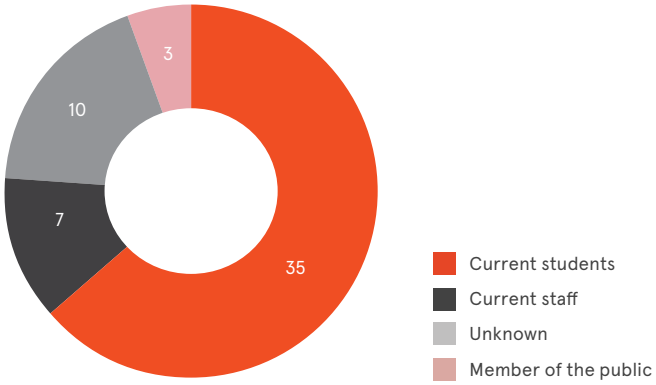

Figure 11: Complaints received: connection of complainant to the University, 2024

As indicated in **Figure 11**, of the 46 complaints that were categorised as University related, the respondent's connection to the University was as follows:

- 30 (65.2%) were current or former students,
- 13 (28.3%) were current or former staff and affiliates,
- 2 (4.3%) were members of the public,
- 1 (2.2%) was unknown.

Of the 46 complaints that were categorised as University related:

- 4 (8.7%) were categorised as sexual assault,
- 42 (91.3%) were categorised as sexual harassment (including the 10 bystander complaints).

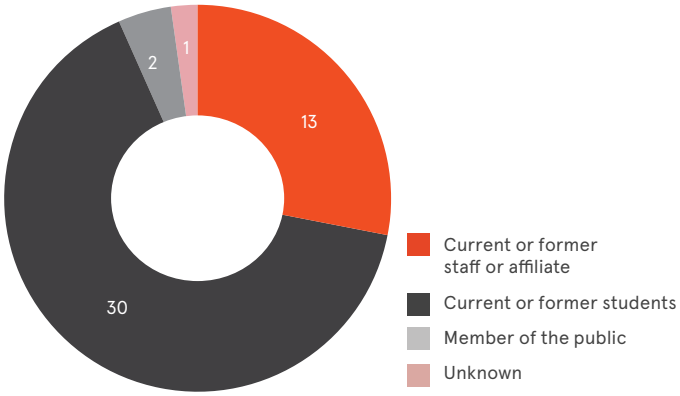

Figure 12: University related complaints received: Connection of respondent to the University, 2024

Outcomes of complaints ongoing from 2023

As of 31 December 2023, there were 12 matters ongoing with outcomes in 2024. The outcomes of these matters are listed below:

Of the four complaints against staff respondents:

- One complaint could not proceed as the complainant ceased engagement in the complaints process,
- Three cases were substantiated, with the following penalties applied for misconduct:
  - a final warning and requirement to engage with training,
  - a requirement to engage with training, and
  - a requirement to engage with counselling.

Of the eight complaints against student respondents:

- one complaint was found to be unsubstantiated,
- one complaint was fully substantiated without investigation as the respondent admitted the allegations,
- three cases went through the assisted resolution pathway. Assisted resolution is a process that can be pursued in lieu of an investigation, where requested by the complainant. It involves a description of the alleged conduct being put to the respondent, along with a list of actions that the complainant would require the respondent to take in order to resolve the complaint. The respondent is not required to admit or deny the allegations and may fully or partially accept or reject any of the actions requested by the complainant. If the respondent rejects the actions or declines to participate in the assisted resolution process, or they breach any agreed conditions, then an investigation may be pursued.
- one complaint was partially substantiated, with a warning provided under the Student Discipline Rule.
- two complaints were fully substantiated with the following penalties applied for misconduct:
  - expulsion from the University, and
  - a suspension for the duration of one semester.

Outcomes of complaints received in 2024

Of the 15 complaints against staff respondents (including three complaints from students):

- 5 complaints were ongoing as of 31 December 2024
- 2 complaints could not proceed as the respondent resigned
- 1 complaint was withdrawn by the complainant
- 2 complaints were resolved via assisted resolution
- 2 complaints were unsubstantiated
- 1 complaint could not proceed as it was non-University related
- 1 complaint from a student was substantiated with the following penalty applied:
  - First and final warning under the Enterprise Agreement, along with face-to-face training and online module completion
- 1 complaint was resolved at a local level

Of the 40 complaints against student respondents (including one complaint from a staff member):

- 10 complaints were submitted by bystanders – these complainants all received an outcome letter before the complaint was closed but did not receive detail that would breach the privacy of the victim-survivor or other parties who were directly involved.
- 4 complaints could not proceed as they were not University-related
- 2 complaints did not provide sufficient detail for the complaint to be progressed
- 5 complaints were withdrawn by the complainant
- 5 complaints were ongoing as of 31 December 2024

Of the remaining 14 complaints that were able to be finalised in 2024:

- 2 complaints went through the assisted resolution process
- 1 complaint was substantiated with the following penalty applied:
  - 1 semester suspension from the University
- 11 complaints were unable to be substantiated because:
  - the complainant did not engage with the process;
  - the respondent was no longer a student of the University;
  - the alleged facts or breach of policy were not substantiated following investigation; or
  - the alleged conduct, if proven, would not have constituted a breach of policy.

Please refer to Table 1.

Table 1: Complaint outcomes and status by connection of respondent to the University, (includes all complaints received in 2024 and ongoing complaints from 2023)

Respondent	Resolved through assisted resolution	Fully or partly substantiated, and misconduct penalty applied	Withdrawn	Ongoing as at 31/12/23	Case closed for bystander, but remains ongoing for victim-survivor complainant	Unsubstantiated	Resolved at local level	Could not proceed – respondent resigned	Not University related, or did not meet the threshold to progress	Total
Current or former student	2 (3.64%)	1 (1.82%)	4 (7.27%)	5 (9.09%)	9 (16.36%)	10 (18.18%)	N/A	N/A	6 (10.91%)	37 (67.27%)
Current or former staff/ affiliate	2 (3.64%)	1 (1.82%)	1 (1.82%)	5 (9.09%)	N/A	2 (3.64%)	1 (1.82%)	2 (3.64%)	1 (1.82%)	15 (27.27%)
Member of the public	N/A	N/A	1 (1.82%)	N/A	1 (1.82%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2 (3.64%)
Unknown	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 (1.82%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 (1.82%)
Totals	**4 (7.27%)**	**2 (3.64%)**	**6 (10.91%)**	**10 (18.18%)**	**10 (18.18%)**	**13 (23.64%)**	**1 (1.82%)**	**2 (3.64%)**	**7 (12.72%)**	**55 (100%)**

Please note that percentages in some columns and rows do not total exactly 100 due to rounding.

2024 key preventative education initiatives

The below initiatives are some key initiatives that were delivered in 2024 in response to the University's Strategic Actions for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Misconduct 2024-2026. They were selected because they demonstrate the University's commitment to improving staff and student safety and improving knowledge of support and reporting options.

Respect@Sydney mandatory module

Since 2018 the University has provided consent education training via the Epigeum Consent Matters module. Completion for the mandatory module became enforceable in Semester 2 2024. A total of 32,208 students enrolled and 28,528 completed the module by 11 December 2024.

Results suppressions were applied to students that did not complete the Consent Matters module by the results release date. There was a total of 3,279 suppressions applied.

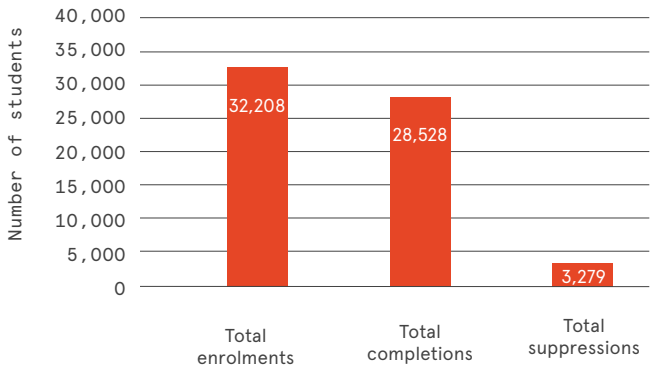

Figure 13: Consent Matters enrolment and academic suppression data

After reviewing the module and student feedback highlighting a perceived lack of diversity and current relevance to University of Sydney students, a new module was developed through co-design and consultations with students, staff, victim-survivors, experts, and the broader community.

A diverse range of student voices including those with disabilities, First Nations, Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM), and LGBTQIA+ students. Impactful videos featuring staff and students enhanced relevance and engagement.

The content in the new module covers a variety of scenarios and features students and staff from diverse backgrounds and identities, ensuring improved relevance and representation for the student body. The content also addresses additional areas of concern with references to the university environment and context, including image-based abuse and power dynamics in relationships.

"Walking, Talking and Working Together"

The University hosted the Our Watch 'Walking Talking and Working Together – Taking a whole of university approach to preventing gender-based violence' event on 21 June 2024.

The event was opened by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Life) to an audience of 140 representatives from universities from across Australia, in the Safer Communities field. Experts from Our Watch, STOP Campaign, R4Respect, National Union of Students Australia and the Commonwealth Department of Education were in attendance.

The purpose of the event was to discuss initiatives for preventing gender-based violence in universities, supporting and creating change across organisations, Educating for Equality, activating men as allies in prevention, the proposed National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence and the potential impact that the proposed National Code will have on the work that is already underway in universities. The event also reinforced and highlighted the connections and commitment that exists between universities to working together to ensure safe university campuses and communities.

Partnership with The Survivor Hub

The Survivor Hub is a survivor-led initiative utilising the knowledge and lived experiences of victim-survivors to support, inform and empower people impacted by sexual assault. The University partnered with The Survivor Hub in 2024 to enhance support for victim-survivors on campus. Through this collaboration, The Survivor Hub hosted monthly peer support group meetups held on the University campus. This also includes consultancy and guidance on key preventative education initiatives related to sexual misconduct and the Safer Communities Office, and provided feedback on essential documents and strategies within the sexual misconduct space. This included the new Respect@Sydney mandatory module.

Courageous Conversations with Grace Tame

The University delivers an Extended Welcome Program each semester to build lasting student connections and provide proactive support pathways as students commence their studies. The program runs over four themed weeks, co-designed and developed with our diverse student cohorts and colleagues and includes Campus Culture activities in Week 2.

On 29 February 2024, a new Campus Culture initiative, Courageous Conversations, was launched in collaboration with the Safer Communities Office and Sydney Ideas. The purpose of the initiative was to meaningfully encourage and elevate open, respectful dialogues around consent, sexual harassment and sexual assault through the format of a high-profile discussion panel featuring Grace Tame, Australian of the Year 2021, internal student and staff speakers, and representatives from The Survivor Hub and Full Stop Australia. Full Stop Australia is a leading sexual, domestic and family violence response and recovery service, offering support, advocacy and education.

Full Stop Australia counsellors and Safer Communities Office staff supported the initiative, to generate awareness of internal and external wellbeing services.

A total of 160 student and staff participants were able to hear from keynote speaker, Grace Tame. Grace Tame has been a vocal advocate for survivors of child sexual abuse, highlighting systemic failures and the need for reform. Her insights focused on silencing of survivors, victim-blaming cultures, institutional barriers to justice, perpetrator protection and power imbalances, the importance of speaking out and education & prevention.

USU - Student Safety Conference

The Office of Student Life sponsored the inaugural 2024 University of Sydney Union (USU) Student Safety Conference. The conference invited students, staff, and other university counterparts to address sexual misconduct across Australian university campuses through student and expert led discussions. The conference featured a diverse range of presentations, discussions and workshops lead by industry leaders. The intention of the conference is to achieve grassroots policy-creation, adaptation and resource sharing amongst student organisations, their student leaders and, consequently. The University continues to collaborate with the USU on key initiatives targeted at the recommendations obtained from the conference.

Respect@Work program

As outlined in the previous Annual Report, in December 2023, a Respect@Work gap analysis and recommendations were submitted to the University for consideration. The University Executive accepted all 36 recommendations from the gap analysis and agreed that the previous Staffing Complaints Review should be incorporated into the overarching Respect@Work Program. Following this endorsement, in 2024, a comprehensive Respect@Work Action Plan was developed that translated the recommendations into 36 Action Items and was endorsed by the University Executive. The Action Plan, which was developed in close consultations with key internal stakeholders, focuses on the seven standards identified by the Australian Human Rights Commission of leadership, culture, knowledge, risk management, support, reporting and response, and monitoring, evaluation, and transparency.

In 2025, the University has commenced implementation of the Action Plan along with a comprehensive governance structure to support the successful implementation of the Program. Further information about the Action Plan is available on the Respect@Work webpage.

Initiatives completed in 2024

In 2024, the University launched the Strategic Actions for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Misconduct 2024-2026 which are an extension of the previous Roadmap to the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct. Below is an outline of the initiatives completed in 2024.

Initiative	Objectives	Participation in 2024	2024 Outcome
Online Epigeum 'Consent Matters' Module	Raise awareness and understanding of consent and bystander intervention	32,208 students required to complete the module.	28,528 students completed the module. 93 students were exempt. 3,279 students had their results suppressed.
In-person Respect@Sydney consent education workshops	To Raise awareness and knowledge about the importance of consent, support and reporting options.	41 sessions attended by 875 first year students, student leaders from residential colleges, University-owned student accommodation and affiliated student accommodation.	In 2024 the consent education workshops made a significant impact, with attendance of 777 students in Semester 1, and 98 students in Semester 2. 408 participants responded to a post-workshop survey. The average rating for workshop participants on the following measures was: – 8.9/10 for informative, – 8.9/10 for relevant, – 9.2/10 for easy to understand
Respect@Sydney peer facilitation project	To engage with student leaders at residential colleges and University-owned accommodation to present consent education to incoming students	8 student leaders co-presented Respect@Sydney alongside the Safer Communities Office.	Student leaders are well respected in University affiliated student accommodation. Using peer education, they helped build trust between Safer Communities staff and new students. Feedback showed students valued their presence, feeling understood and supported.
Ethical Bystander & Responding with Compassion	Provide student leaders with the tools and strategies to intervene in problematic behaviours and respond with compassion to disclosures of sexual misconduct from their peers	1 pilot Ethical Bystander session was held within 2 Residential Colleges, attended by 14 students from affiliated student accommodation 8 Responding with Compassion sessions were held for affiliated student accommodation attended by 103 students from affiliated student accommodation.	14 participants responded to a post-workshop survey. The average rating for workshop participants on the following measures was: Ethical Bystander – 9/10 for informative, – 9.2/10 for relevant, and – 9.2/10 for easy to understand. A roll out of Ethical Bystander and Responding with Compassion training will proceed in 2025 targeting student leaders in residential Colleges. Testimonials from students who attended Responding with Compassion workshops indicated they found it useful to learn practical ways to respond to disclosures, what words and phrases to add to their vocabulary, and how trauma affects the brain.

Initiative	Objectives	Participation in 2024	2024 Outcome
ResLife Mandatory training 2024: Respect@Sydney-Accommodation module	Develop an online module for residents of University-owned student accommodation to increase understanding of sexual harassment and sexual assault, support and reporting options.	30% of residents participated in the online module.	In 2025 it will be mandatory for University-owned student accommodation residents to complete the Respect@Sydney – Accommodation module.
Project Respect	Delivering workshops to international students focusing on increasing knowledge and awareness of domestic and family violence.	Sydney University Village - 14 registrations 6 attending. The Centre for English Teaching (CET) 30 student registrations with zero attending.	Interest and support from students and staff was positive. Participation was less than desirable. Review of timing of workshops to ensure students have greater access to the opportunity. There was insufficient attendance to provide robust evaluation.
The Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Supervisors "Respectful Research" workshops	To encourage open dialogue on supervisory relationships, boundaries, and power dynamics for HDR supervisors and students, clarifying conduct expectations and support options.	In 2024, 22 workshops were delivered with a total attendance of 498 HDR supervisors.	202 HDR Supervisors responded to a post workshop survey and indicated that they had increased their ability to identify, intervene in, and report supervisory conduct dilemmas.
Provision of priority sexual assault counselling via partnership with Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Sexual Assault Counselling Service	Provide students with priority sexual assault counselling and holistic care, supporting them to address and mitigate the impacts of trauma.	332 appointments offered.	N/A
International students' sexual and intimate partner violence experiences study (INVEST), run by the University of Melbourne	To explore the nature, circumstances, and impacts of sexual and intimate partner violence against international student women in Australia.	Approximately 250 University of Sydney international students who identify as women responded to the survey.	Survey data collection for the INVEST project closed in May 2023, with approximately 1600 eligible responses nationwide. A publication was released in 2024 based on the survey results.
Student Leadership Co-design Training Program	Ethical Bystander training to equip student leaders with tools and strategies to intervene in problematic behaviours and to navigate and respond responsibly to critical incidents.	89 students attended Ethical Bystander training.	88 students were surveyed. 89% indicated they have a greater confidence in their ability to use the knowledge and skills to be an active bystander.
Responding to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault online module	To equip Student Leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure the safety and wellbeing during student community events and programs. In 2024, student leaders complete the online module.	751 students completed the UA Responding to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault online module.	325 students were surveyed and 84% indicated that they have a better awareness of their role as a student leader in seeking, accessing and referring for support.
2023 Annual Report on Sexual Misconduct	Distribute the 2023 Annual Report on Sexual Misconduct	On August 7, 2024, an all-student email was sent to 71,397 recipients, including students and student-facing staff.	Production and distribution of the 2023 report.
Safer Communities Advisory Group	Consult with student representatives and staff on matters relating to sexual misconduct response and prevention.	4 meetings were held in addition to one extraordinary meeting.	Consultations and endorsement regarding the University's Strategic Actions to respond and prevent gender-based violence,Collobrations for USU Student Safety Conference and other on campus activations.

Initiative	Objectives	Participation in 2024	2024 Outcome
Respect in our Community: Preventing bullying, harassment and discrimination against staff online module	Raise awareness of the rights and responsibilities of staff in relation to the prevention of bullying, harassment and discrimination at the University	3,888 staff completed the Respect in the Community module in 2024.	No evaluation data available.
Community of practice with the residential colleges	Conduct a Community of Practice to discuss trauma-informed and procedurally fair management of incidents involving residential students and share information on best-practice preventative education and training	3 Community of Practice meetings were held with Heads of Colleges and key staff in 2024.	The Community of Practice has enhanced dialogue, cooperation and collaboration between the University and the residential colleges in responding to sexual misconduct matters, in the best interests of our students.
Domestic Violence Awareness Month: 'Blaze' Film Screening held on 25th May 2024 in collaboration with Domestic Violence NSW	To provide a diverse range of activities in line with our commitment to 2024 Domestic Violence Awareness Month.	40 students and staff attended the screening.	The feature film 'Blaze' explores how creativity can be a source of healing for children victim-survivors exposed to violence. The screening was followed by a recorded conversation with the film's director – allowing the audience to unpack some of the advocacy within the film.
Communications updates	Update of relevant University of Sydney webpages with clear complaint and disclosure reporting pathways, including the National Student Ombudsman.		www.sydney.edu.au/students/complaints/external-review.html
Breaking the Cycle: She is Not Your Rehab	A joint Sextember event in partnership with USYD, UNSWs Mental Health Network, Adelaide University and University of Queensland, Mataio Faafetai (Matt) Brown from 'She Is Not Your Rehab' shared his lived experience story about the power of mental health conversations and addressing childhood trauma.	106 attendees listened from a male perspective, the importance of promoting well-being among men in order to build safer and more equitable society, and the roles men can play in preventing intergenerational cycles of gendered violence.	42 attendees responded to a survey and provided 4.7 stars for the event. 100% would recommend this event to a friend.

Priorities for 2025

The University is committed to continuously improving our framework of safety and support for victim-survivors and range of preventative initiatives to address and respond to sexual misconduct. We remain dedicated to ensuring everyone feels safe and supported to report concerns, listening to victim-survivors' voices and responding with compassion and confidentiality.

In 2025 we will continue to focus on improving and strengthening the way we deliver education, safety and support, informed by the voices and needs of our community, evidence-based approaches and learnings from 2024. We will consult with students, staff and other members of our University community to review and enhance preventative training and communication initiatives and reduce barriers to access support. We will also continue to collaborate with other organisations and stakeholders to collectively strive for meaningful changes aimed at addressing and responding to sexual misconduct in the community.

Our priority actions in 2025 to prevent, address and respond to sexual misconduct are outlined below.

Objective	Actions
Refine and consolidate existing preventative education programs into a structured, step-by-step learning pathway for students and staff. A well-defined structure will also enhance relevance, timeliness, and opportunities for student leadership, making the learning journey more impactful and cohesive.	Conduct a review of current programs and initiatives across student and staff cohorts including faculties, clubs & societies, Sport, university owned and affiliated student accommodation. Collaborate with the Digital Accessibility team to ensure that modules are accessible for people living with a disability.
Align with the Action Plan Addressing Gender Based Violence in Higher Education, proposed National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence and National Student Ombudsman guidance.	Address the four strategic action areas of sexual misconduct prevention and response work. 1. Capacity building 2. Engagement and early intervention 3. Continuous improvement 4. Governance
Review the new Respect@Sydney module to ensure that it is meeting stakeholder needs and is inclusive and accessible to all students in replacing the Consent Matters module.	Consult with students and participants of the module, and advisory and co-design groups to review the success of the module focusing on engagement levels and feedback.
Expand a peer-to-peer model for preventative education programs to improve engagement and incorporate co-design.	Engage widely with faculties, schools and the broader University community to – increase student involvement in the development and delivery of preventative initiatives peer-to-peer facilitation. – create and develop a network of student ambassadors to be engaged in year round events and initiatives with the Safer Communities Office – recruit, train and develop a network of student ambassadors as first responders across the university.
Expand Ethical Bystander training across key student cohorts	16 staff have completed 'Train the Trainer' course to deliver Ethical Bystander training to students in 2025, starting with students residing in University-owned and affiliated student accommodation.

Objective	Actions
Promote awareness, inclusion and accessibility of the Safer Communities Office to students from diverse backgrounds.	Safer Communities Office will partner with the Gadigal Centre, with scheduled weekly staff co-location to improve engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Develop Project Respect, an initiative to support international students with learning about domestic, family and intimate partner violence.
Action deliverables within the Respect@Work program and Action Plan.	Continue to work across project streams to action endorsed deliverables as part of the Respect@Work Action Plan. A key deliverable for the SCO is to consult with key stakeholders and develop a whole-of-institution campaign to promote awareness of support and reporting options to staff and students.
Work with academics and researchers across the University to ensure whole-of-institution approach to preventing and responding to sexual misconduct	The Safer Communities Office will work more closely with academics who have expertise in the area of sexual assault and sexual harassment to ensure key projects are informed by evidence-based practice and research.
Increase collaboration and resource sharing with other higher education institutions and external organisations to promote best-practice.	Continue to participate and engage in Our Watch's NSW Universities Prevention Connection and the G08 Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Working Group. Make referrals to and work with local government and not-for-profit organisations on joint initiatives, where appropriate.
Raise awareness of the Safer Communities Office and the support it provides, beyond the University.	Safer Communities Office staff will continue to present at events and conferences, participate in interagency and build partnerships.
Deliver on the recommendations from the SAGE Cygnet Award	Recommendations from SAGE focus on continuing the engagement with the University's Respect@Work project team to address gaps around data, trust, inclusion, communication, and accountability, developing examples of intersectional experiences to include in training. Reviewing content around sexual misconduct, and mechanisms for evaluative feedback and impact on behaviour from staff and exploring opportunities to improve communication between units.
HDR Respectful Supervisory Relationships education module	SCO to contribute to the development of a module for all new HDR supervisors to complete that focuses on understanding of the UA Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships and the expectations all HDR supervisors must adhere to. On completion of the module participants should feel confident to identify, intervene and respond to supervisory conduct dilemmas.

Glossary

Affiliate: A person appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions on its behalf, including but not limited to:

- an honorary title holder engaged under the Honorary Titles Policy 2013;
- a consultant or contractor to the University;
- an office holder in a University entity, a member of any University committee, board, or foundation.

An affiliate is not an employee of the University.

Affiliated student accommodation: Accommodation that is associated with the University, by virtue of it operating on University lands or using University branding, but which the University does not own or control (including the residential colleges).

Apprehended Violence Order (AVO): An ADVO (Apprehended Domestic Violence Order) or an APVO (Apprehended Personal Violence Order) made by a court.

Note: An ADVO protects a person where the parties live together. An APVO protects a person in other circumstances, including where the parties are both staff members and affiliates.

Assisted resolution: Resolution between the complainant and the respondent is assisted by the University. Assisted resolution may include, but is not limited to, an apology, facilitated discussion (including mediation or conciliation), or an agreed plan of action to prevent further incidents.

Bystander intervention: Seeing and recognising a potentially harmful situation and choosing to respond in a safe way that could prevent or stop the harm from happening or continuing.

Complainant: Any person who makes a complaint of sexual misconduct.

Complaint: A complaint of University related sexual misconduct by a person who wants the University to investigate or to take specific action in response to the incident.

Disclosure: A report of sexual misconduct by a person who does not want the University to investigate or to take any specific action in response to the incident.

HDR: Higher Degree by Research

Historic Sexual Abuse: Any form of sexual abuse alleged to have occurred on or before 1 July 2018.

Interim Measures: Temporary measures taken by the University against a respondent, in accordance with the Staff Sexual Misconduct Policy 2023 or the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy 2023, to minimise the potential for harm to any person while a complaint is being resolved or investigated.

Office of General Counsel (OGC): Responsible for the provision of legal and other services to the University.

Online Reporting Form: An online form where current and former students, staff and affiliates and members of the public can make both disclosures and complaints.

Non-University related conduct: Conduct that has no connection to the University and cannot be investigated or form the basis of a complaint, but may be reported by a student or staff member seeking trauma-informed care and support.

Protective Services: 24/7 service on campus to respond to emergencies and to assist students who are feeling unsafe on campus.

Relevant delegate: The University employee with delegated authority to take action or make a decision under the University of Sydney Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021.

Reporter: A victim-survivor or bystander who makes a disclosure or complaint of sexual misconduct.

Residential college: Residential colleges associated with the University of Sydney. The residential colleges are independent institutions with autonomous governing bodies and operate independently of the University. They are:

- Mandelbaum House
- Sancta Sophia College
- St Andrew's College
- St John's College
- St Paul's College
- Wesley College
- Women's College.

Respondent: A person whose conduct is the subject of a disclosure or complaint of sexual misconduct.

Safer Communities Office: Specialist staff within the portfolio of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), who provide support and guidance to current and former students, staff and affiliates affected by sexual misconduct.

Safety planning: Planning with a client in a collaborative way to best keep them safe in times of great turmoil (i.e., domestic and family violence and suicidality).

Student: A person who is currently enrolled at the University of Sydney, including:

- award students (i.e., studying for a formal qualification)
- exchange students
- study abroad students
- continuing education students
- other non-award students
- students of the Centre for English Teaching.

Student Affairs Unit (SAU): Specialist staff within the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), who assist with the resolution of student complaints and reports of student misconduct in accordance with University policies and procedures.

Sexual abuse: Any sexual act that a person does not consent to, and which is contrary to accepted community standards, having regard to the year in which the conduct is alleged to have occurred.

Sexual assault: Non-consensual sexual intercourse, oral sex, and sexual touching. Sexual assault is also sexual misconduct.

Sexual harassment: Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature other than sexual intercourse, oral sex, and sexual touching. For the purposes of this report, sexual harassment includes the recording or distributing of intimate images without consent, sexual gestures, sexually suggestive comments or jokes, repeated or inappropriate invitations to go out or 'hook up', and intrusive questions about a person's private life or physical appearance. Sexual harassment is also sexual misconduct.

Sexual misconduct: a range of unacceptable sexual behaviours that are in breach of the University's codes of conduct and policies, including sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Staff or staff member: An employee of the University, including a casual employee.

Students' Representative Council (SRC): The independent representative body for undergraduate students at the University of Sydney.

Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA): The independent representative association for postgraduate students at the University of Sydney.

Sydney Uni Sport (SUS): The University of Sydney's sporting body. SUS is a separate incorporated entity and operates independently of the University.

Trauma-informed: Trauma-informed practice is a framework for service delivery that is based on knowledge and understanding of how trauma affects peoples' lives. It involves upholding the trauma-informed principles of choice, collaboration, trust, safety and empowerment in the work that we do with victim-survivors to minimise re-traumatisation.

University-owned accommodation: Accommodation that is owned or managed by a public higher education institution and provided to registered students at the University. At the University of Sydney University-owned accommodation includes:

- Abercrombie Student Accommodation
- Nepean Hall
- Nepean Lodge
- The Regiment Student Accommodation
- Queen Mary Building.

University related conduct: Any conduct that is connected to the University, including conduct that:

- refers or relates to the University, its activities, or its staff, affiliates or students in their status as staff, affiliates or students at the University
- occurs on, or in connection with, University lands or other property owned by the University
- occurs at, or in connection with, a residential college;
- occurs at or in connection with University-owned or affiliated student accommodation
- occurs using, or is facilitated by, University ICT resources or other University equipment
- occurs during, or relates to, the performance of duties for the University
- occurs during, or in connection to, any University related function or event (whether sanctioned or organised by the University or not) or when representing the University in any capacity
- occurs during any event run by or affiliated with student representative organisations, student clubs or student societies (whether sanctioned or organised by the University or not)
- occurs during students' clinical, practicum, internship, or work experience placements
- occurs while a University of Sydney student is participating in an overseas exchange, study abroad or another approved program.

Workplace Relations: The specialist staff within Human Resources who assist with the resolution of complaints and reports of misconduct by staff and affiliates in accordance with University policies and procedures.

Victim-survivor: A person who has experienced harm as a result of sexual misconduct.

Appendix: Complaint-handling processes

The University's complaints handling processes are centred on the needs and safety of victim survivors, and have been designed in a way that minimises the risk of re-traumatisation while ensuring procedural fairness for the respondent. The Safer Communities Office offers ongoing support to the complainant throughout the resolution process, while respondent students are supported by Wellbeing Services and respondent staff are sought supported by the Employee Assistance Program.

Staff sexual misconduct complaints are handled by Workplace Relations (within Human Resources) under the Staff Sexual Misconduct Policy and Staff Sexual Misconduct Response Procedures. Complaints of student sexual misconduct are handled by the Student Affairs Unit in accordance with the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy and Student Sexual Misconduct Response Procedures. These processes share common principles, stages and possible outcomes: See **Figure 14** for more details.

Figure 14: Flowchart of the University's complaint-handling processes

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