



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY

# Roadmap to Prevention of Sexual Misconduct

May 2023

Safer Communities Office

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## Introduction

The University continues to be strongly committed to addressing and responding to sexual misconduct on campus. The University launched a roadmap for the prevention of sexual misconduct in March 2022. This is a response to the concerns highlighted in the 2021 National Student Safety Survey (NSSS).

This roadmap includes targeted action to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for the University community. The NSSS indicated that there are cohorts that are at higher risk of experiencing sexual violence. These include younger students, LGBTQIA+ students and students with disability, as well as students who live in student accommodation. This Roadmap is led by the University's Safer Communities Office in consultation with our key stakeholders such as our students who are at the heart of what we do.

The proposed initiatives, as part of the roadmap, were endorsed by the University Executive (UE) People and Culture Committee in August 2022.

The Safer Communities Office provides trauma informed support to current and former students and staff who have experienced sexual misconduct. The Office also provides preventative education such as developing and facilitating workshops and resources to students and staff. This is demonstrated through the delivery of consent workshops for all first-year students and student leaders residing on campus, first responder training for student-facing staff, bystander intervention training and respectful relationships training for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) supervisors. The below are the current updates to the initiatives outlined within the roadmap.

# Current Initiatives

## **Improving awareness of support and reporting options available: 'It's All About Consent'**

The '[It's All About Consent](#)' campaign is a campaign developed by the Marketing and Communications team together with the Safer Communities Office. This was soft-launched in Semester 2, 2022 and launched University-wide in Semester 1, 2023. This campaign aimed to raise awareness about the Safer Communities Office, supports available, affirmative consent and encourage active bystander intervention. More information on the Safer Communities Office can be found on the [Current Students website](#).

## **Improving transparency and confidence in reporting processes for the University community: Annual report on sexual misconduct**

The University of Sydney is committed to producing an annual report on sexual misconduct in 2023, reporting on 2022 information. This is to promote transparency and accountability regarding the number of reports received and the University internal outcomes of complaints lodged. The report also highlights the prevention initiatives that the University has undertaken since 2017.

This is in response to the National Student Safety Survey (NSSS)'s findings that indicate that there is a lack of transparency and confidence in the University reporting processes.

## **Streamlining reporting pathways**

The Safer Communities Office have been successful in streamlining three separate sexual misconduct online reporting forms to one form which was launched in February 2023. The simplified form consists of less questions and is more accessible for the University community.

## **Improving inclusion and accessibility**

The Safer Communities Office is currently undertaking a project to improve accessibility to our vulnerable communities such as students living with a disability, students who identify as LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) students and First Nations students.

The National Student Safety Survey (NSSS) indicated that students who identify as LGBTQIA+ and students who have a disability were more likely to experience sexual harassment in the last 12 months than their peers. One in eight Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students had been sexually harassed in a university context in the past 12 months at the time of the NSSS survey.

The Safer Communities Office has completed research to establish best practice guidelines recommended by specialist community organisations and will be consulting with students from our vulnerable communities in the University in mid 2023 to gain insight and knowledge from those who have lived experience.

## **Information provision for students on University placements**

The Safer Communities Office and Wellbeing services team have been working with students and staff from the Faculty of Medicine and Health (FMH) to raise awareness of the support the Safer Communities Office provides and Wellbeing services team. This project includes ensuring students are provided key information prior to entering clinical placements and ensuring that FMH staff are provided training on responding to disclosures of sexual misconduct. Informed by student and staff consultations, a staff placement resource guide has been developed for FMH staff which includes key support and reporting information included in lectures. The working group is currently developing an online module for students that contains essential information to be completed prior to entering on placements, set to be launched in late 2023.

## **Interactive consent workshops**

Consent workshops are delivered in person by the Safer Communities Office for all new students and student leaders in University accommodation and residential colleges. These workshops cover topics such as available supports, reporting options, consent, power and control, digital safety, and bystander intervention. In 2022, a peer facilitation model was introduced whereby students were selected to be trained as facilitators to co-facilitate this training Safer Communities Office staff. In Semester 1, 2023 a total of 47 workshops were delivered to 1878 students.

## **Online 'Consent Matters' module**

Since 2018, this module has been mandatory for all newly enrolled students. This module covers topics such as affirmative consent, bystander intervention, misconceptions, communication skills, respectful relationships and boundaries. In 2022, 23,255 students have completed this training. There are discussions currently underway to review this module. Consultations with students will occur in 2023 around the launch of a new module in 2024.

## **Improving sexual health education for international students**

To address gaps in knowledge on sexual health and consent amongst international students, the Safer Communities Office has partnered with NSW Health to deliver the [Sexual Health Peer Facilitation Project \(SHAPE\) program](#). This is a peer-facilitated sexual health and consent training for students. Pilot sessions were delivered in late 2022 and continue to be rolled out to new students at the Centre of English Teaching. Student peer facilitators have learnt valuable skills and knowledge on how to facilitate training and to engage young people in sexual health education. For quality assurance, trainers are provided advice in consultation with the Safer Communities Office. Safer Communities will continue to collaborate with the Centre of English Teaching in 2023 to implement a wider roll-out of this project. This program covers topics such as sexually transmitted infections, contraception, services and referral pathways, consent, cultural diversity, and communication skills.

## **International students' sexual and intimate partner violence experiences study (INVEST)**

The University participated in research with the University of Melbourne and the Safer Families Centre of Excellence in March 2023, looking into the nature and prevalence of sexual misconduct amongst international students. The survey was successfully launched to all woman-identifying students to voluntarily participate. Participation in the INVEST research will provide us with insightful data and

information on where to focus our efforts in prevention and response for international students, including the development of culturally sensitive resources.

### **Bystander intervention and awareness across the University**

One of the aims of the 'It's All About Consent' campaign was to raise awareness of bystander intervention. Since 2022, the University has organised training for all student leaders under the Student Leadership Training Co-Design program; a key initiative being completion of a module relating to responding to disclosures and understanding the drivers of sexual violence. This training is compulsory for all student leaders within the SRC, SUPRA, USU and SUSF. The Safer Communities Office is also collaborating with Full Stop Australia to design in-person bystander training for student leaders to be piloted in July 2023 with a view to evaluation and a wider roll out across the University.

### **First responder training for student leaders and student-facing staff**

The Safer Communities Office continues to collaborate with Full Stop Australia to deliver first responder training for student-facing staff to equip them with skills on how to respond to disclosures of sexual misconduct. This training has occurred since 2018 and in 2020 an online module was introduced. As of May 2023, 399 staff have completed the online module. This training is also mandatory for student leaders of residential colleges. In Semester 1, 2023 a total of 111 students have completed the training. For more information regarding the training please contact Preventative Education Specialist, Karina Chalouhi on [karina.chalouhi@sydney.edu.au](mailto:karina.chalouhi@sydney.edu.au).

### **Higher Degree by Research (HDR) supervisors Respectful Relationships training**

In response to the NSSS, Safer Communities is delivering 'Respectful Relationships' training for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) supervisors. This training promotes engaging and interactive discussion related to topics such as professional boundaries, power imbalances and supporting students who have experienced sexual misconduct. This training was designed in collaboration and consultation with the Director of Graduate Research, HDR supervisors and students to ensure best practice and outcomes. The training is based on the Australian Council of Graduate Research 'Respectful Research Training' resources. Pilot sessions were delivered to HDR supervisors in November 2022. Currently there are two sessions occurring each month in 2023. This training is essential for all HDR supervisors undergoing re-registration. For more information regarding this training please contact Preventative Education Specialist, Karina Chalouhi on [karina.chalouhi@sydney.edu.au](mailto:karina.chalouhi@sydney.edu.au).

### **Review of policies and procedures**

The Safer Communities Office is currently in the process of reviewing the [2018 Student Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) and [Procedures](#) and [2020 Staff Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) and [Procedures](#). This is being done to ensure that the purpose of these documents is being met and to address any gaps in the policy. This is being done in consultation with the Student Representative Council (SRC), University Student Union (USU), Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) and other key stakeholders.

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