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

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| **University name: University of Technology Sydney** | | |
| **Recommendation no.** | **Action already taken** | **Planned/future action** |
| 1  Vice-Chancellors should take direct responsibility for the implementation of these recommendations, including decision-making and monitoring and evaluation of actions taken.  To assist and advise them in this respect, Vice-Chancellors should have an advisory body within their institution which has responsibility for guiding the implementation of the recommendations made in this report.  The advisory body should report directly to the Vice-Chancellor of each university and include representatives from:   * the university’s senior leadership * the student body * academic staff * residential colleges affiliated with the university * student services, such as: counselling services, medical services and campus security, and * frontline sexual assault services.   The advisory body should be responsible for developing an action plan for the implementation of these recommendations.  The development of an action plan should involve broad and extensive consultation with all relevant stakeholders from the university community and, where relevant, the wider community. The advisory body should also seek independent expertise where relevant and draw on existing research and best practice.  The advisory body should assess and publicly report on the university’s progress towards implementation of these recommendations within 18 months of the release of this report. From then on, public reporting on progress should occur on an annual basis. | In early 2017, the UTS Vice-Chancellor established a Prevention of Sexual Assault and Harassment Working Group.  This senior group is led by the Provost, supported by a dedicated Project Officer for the Prevention of Sexual Assault, and reports to the Vice-Chancellor. Its membership includes representatives of the university’s:   * HR, legal, policy, communications functions * student body * student accommodation management * student services, including counselling services, and * campus security.   Feeding into the Working Group are various cross-university networks, focusing on specific streams e.g. communications; education and awareness; student consultation; and governance and policy, and a Student Consultative Group. These ensure widespread consultation and input into the university’s actions and priorities.  In particular, the Student Consultative Group has diverse representation, to ensure ongoing dialogue with students relating to sexual assault and harassment initiatives.  Each of these bodies have fed into the university’s Prevention of Sexual Assault and Harassment Action Plan.  External engagement and inputs to the Action Plan include dialogue with key government and peak bodies including:   * Transport For NSW * NSW Department of Education * NSW Vice-Chancellors’ Committee * NSW Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault * The City of Sydney * NSW Police   Regular updates on the university’s progress against the Action Plan have been publicly communicated in August and December 2017, and May 2018.  Regular progress reports to the University Council, Senior Leadership Group and Academic Board have also occurred during the past 12 months. | The Working Group will focus on developing long term systematic approaches to reducing the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment.  The Project Officer will continue to support the Working Group in this process. |
| 2  Universities develop a plan for addressing the drivers of sexual assault and sexual harassment that:   * provides students and staff with education about: behaviours that constitute sexual assault and sexual harassment, consent and respectful relationships, ‘violence supportive attitudes’ and bystander intervention, and * identifies existing resources and communications campaigns that reinforce key messages of education programs for dissemination to staff and students.   Education programs and communications should:   * target all levels of the organisation – current and future students, staff, residential colleges, sports clubs, student societies and student unions * be based on best practice and research * be developed and delivered by individuals and/or organisations with expertise in sexual violence prevention * be developed in consultation with university students, and * include measures for evaluating and refining the actions taken. | The UTS Prevention of Sexual Assault and Harassment Action Plan includes various activities aimed at addressing the underlying causes of sexual assault and harassment, including:   * Mandatory *Consent Matters* training for all students and staff, introduced in 2018 * *Sex and Ethics* Training for all UTS Housing Residential Networkers * Face-to-face training each session for all ActivateUTS student club executives for help identifying, preventing, reporting and responding to sexual assault and harassment * *Ethical Bystander* training for all UTS Peer Networkers * An ongoing calendar of (internally and externally created) student-focused communications regarding topics such as sexual consent, bystander behaviours etc. * A student-driven, interactive campaign (*Wanna spoon? Ask first!*) with activations at ODay, Summerfest (music concert), Night Noodle Markets etc, where a free ice-cream stall provided an informal, interpersonal and non-threatening setting to discuss sex, consent, bystander behaviours, reporting and other related topics. The campaign was extremely well received by students. | UTS will monitor the efficacy and scope of our approach to addressing the drivers of sexual assault and sexual harassment and adjust our action plan accordingly. |
| 3  In order to ensure students and staff know about support services and reporting processes for sexual assault or sexual harassment, universities should:   * widely disseminate information about university reporting avenues to staff and students * widely disseminate information about internal and external services to staff and students, including: university counselling and medical services, campus security, local sexual assault services, police, medical centres, hospitals, counselling services and anti-discrimination agencies * ensure that information about internal and external reporting procedures and support services is displayed clearly, in a logical place(s) on the university website * ensure that information about internal and external reporting procedures and support services is provided to students as part of their orientation into university and to new staff as part of their human resources induction/on-boarding * ensure that information about internal and external reporting procedures and support services is accessible to all students and staff, including: people with disability, people from CALD backgrounds, and * develop relationships with external services (local sexual assault service, local hospital) to enable referral of students to these services where necessary.   Universities should evaluate the activities undertaken to increase awareness of support services and reporting processes to ensure that these measures have been effective in increasing awareness among staff and students. | UTS has ensured widespread awareness of support services and reporting processes through initiatives including:   * Using the expertise within our Design Innovation Research Centre to examine student-informed ways of improving the experience of reporting incidents of sexual assault and harassment and accessing support. * Introducing an online portal for those who wish to make a disclosure about sexual harassment or sexual assault but prefer not to do so in person, on campus. * Introducing mandatory online reporting for all staff who receive a disclosure or are aware of an incident of sexual violence involving a student. * A formal MOU with Relationships Australia NSW on a new way for students to self-select a counsellor through a separate online service that lists UTS counsellors and more than 100 other professionals. * Emergency numbers included on the reverse of newly issued student and staff cards from 2018. * Including a focus on respectful relationships and support services in onboarding student communications. * Updated onboarding resources for new staff, promoting a zero-tolerance culture around sexual assault and harassment and reporting responsibilities. * Production of an ActivateUTS emergency contact card for students attending off-site events. * An audit of all online information pertaining to sexual assault and harassment reporting and support services within the UTS web environment, followed by improvements. * Consultation with faculty staff to create an Academic Staff Engagement Strategy and identify opportunities to facilitate the transparent management of reporting incidents. * The biennial UTS Housing survey has been updated to help the university understand the extent of residents’ awareness of UTS support services. | UTS will continue to review our engagement strategy with our staff and staff to maintain a focus on focus the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment. |
| 4  In order to ensure that actions taken by universities to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment are appropriate, within a year of the release of this report universities should commission an independent, expert-led review of existing university policies and response pathways in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment.  This review should assess the effectiveness of existing university policies and pathways and make specific recommendations to universities about best practice responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment.  In the interim, and at an institutional level, universities should draw on sexual violence counselling expertise to develop and review processes for responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment of students to ensure that they:   * ensure the immediate safety and wellbeing of the individual who has experienced the sexual assault or sexual harassment * are clear and accessible * provide individuals with control over what happens to their report * have the flexibility to suit individual circumstances * provide students with support to continue with their studies * provide specialist support, from someone who has specialist expertise and training in sexual assault, sexual harassment and trauma counselling of sexual assault survivors, and * accommodate the needs of students from a diverse range of backgrounds. | UTS has commenced an ongoing audit and review of policies and procedures relating to the handling of student complaints.  This has led to policy change, for instance in November 2017 the University’s student rules were amended to specifically include sexual assault, indecent assault and sexual harassment as types of misconduct, and linking these specific behaviours to possible penalties including expulsion and rescission of academic awards conferred by the university.  In addition, an assessment of existing contractual arrangements with external organisations that receive UTS students (internships, industry placements etc.) has taken place.  UTS’ existing governance instruments ensure informed investigation protocols regarding our obligation to ensure procedural fairness and natural justice for all parties during a grievance resolution process. | UTS will continue to review and monitor our policy suite and procedures in line with our continuous improvement strategy, drawing on sector and community best practice as it evolves. |
| 5  Universities should conduct an assessment to identify staff members and student representatives within their institution most likely to receive disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment.  Universities should ensure that these staff members and student representatives receive training in responding to disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment, delivered by an organisation with specialist expertise in this area. | UTS has identified staff and students most likely to receive disclosures and have since provided *Compassionate Responder* training to Security staff, Counsellors and Student Leaders.  In addition, vicarious trauma training by *Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia* has been made available to students and non-clinical staff who receive disclosures of sexual violence. | Identified staff and students will receive Epigeum’s *Responding to Disclosures* training later in 2018. |
| 6  Universities should ensure that information about individual disclosures and reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment is collected and stored confidentially and used for continuous improvement of processes, including:   * details of the complaint/incident * steps taken to respond to the complaint/incident, i.e.: whether the individual reported to police, whether the perpetrator was moved to a different lecture/tutorial * support or assistance received, i.e.: whether the person received counselling from university services, whether they reported to police, whether they received support from an external sexual assault service * time taken to respond to the report and/or refer the person to support services, and * any feedback provided by the complainant/respondent in relation to the process.   Access to this information should be limited to staff members with responsibility for responding to disclosures and reports and those responsible for improving university responses to disclosures and reports.  On a regular basis – at least every six months – Vice-Chancellors should be provided with de-identified reports of this data, including any trends or identifiable concerns which arise, along with recommendations for any necessary improvements to processes. | Ongoing streamlining of systems is occurring at UTS to ensure information is routinely collected and stored confidentially and used appropriately by relevant officers.  A new staff member has been employed specifically to ensure the capturing and reporting of data relating to complaints/incidents.  Information is provided to the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor every month, to ensure oversight and to allow for continuous improvement in the university’s response, as it implements a zero-tolerance approach. | An evening counselling service is planned for later in 2018 |
| 7  Within six months of this report, but as soon as possible, universities should conduct an audit of university counselling services to assess:   * the capacity of university counselling services to respond to students’ requests for counselling in an appropriately timely manner, and * how many university counselling staff have received training in working with sexual assault survivors. * As part of this audit, universities should collect data on: * the average length of time students are required to wait to see a university counsellor, and * the number of urgent/crisis requests for counselling received.   This data should be assessed to determine whether additional counselling services are required to meet the urgent needs of students who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment.  If additional counselling services are required, universities should ensure that these additional resources are in place as soon as practicable. | UTS’ Student Services Unit provides counselling services for students. Its review of its counselling support prior to the AHRC report led to:   * Increasing the number of counsellors trained in responding to trauma to the equivalent of 11 full-time positions. They now include a social worker with a background in sexual health. * a specialist UTS trauma-informed 1800 telephone support service. * A formal MOU with Relationships Australia NSW on a new way for students to self-select a counsellor through a separate online service that lists UTS counsellors and more than 100 other professionals. |  |
| 8  Universities should engage an independent body to conduct the National university student survey of sexual assault and sexual harassment at three-yearly intervals to track progress in reducing the prevalence of these incidents at a sector-wide level. | UTS remains supportive of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of sexual assault and sexual harassment amongst university students in Australia. |  |
| 9  In addition to considering the implementation of the university recommendations made in this report, residential colleges and university residences should commission an  independent, expert-led review of the factors which contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings.  This review should consider:   * appropriate responses by a college or university residence to reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment * a trauma-informed and rights-based approach in a situation in which an allegation of sexual assault has been made * the ways that hazing practices and college ‘traditions’ facilitate a culture which may increase the likelihood of sexual violence * the role of alcohol in facilitating a culture which may increase the likelihood of sexual violence * the level and nature of supervision in a twenty-four-hour residential setting in which large numbers of young people are living away from home, and * the level and adequacy of training required to equip residential advisors to serve as first responders or in response to matters of sexual assault and harassment. | UTS does not have any independent residential colleges and can therefore directly manage the culture and environment of its university residences.  UTS previously completed a review of its student accommodation facilities, and now students living in UTS residences receive all the training and support enjoyed by all UTS students (e.g. *Consent Matters* training), but in addition:   * All members of the UTS Housing Resident Networker program receive Sex and Ethics training. * The UTS Housing survey has been updated to help the university understand the extent of residents’ awareness of UTS support services, and reporting avenues specifically. * Alcohol-free events are routinely held. * Prospective students applying for an accommodation place are asked how they could contribute to a safe, supportive and positive environment. |  |