

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

University name: University of New England		
Recommendation no.	Action already taken	Planned/future action
<p>1. <i>Establishment of the required governance structures and ensuring the leadership of Vice-Chancellors in the timely and comprehensive implementation of the Report's recommendations</i></p>	<p>The Vice-Chancellor has established an Advisory Committee to drive the implementation of the University's response to the <i>Change the Course</i> report recommendations, as well as appointing a dedicated project manager to oversee and evaluate progress.</p> <p>The first official meeting was held in November 2017, and regular meetings have continued into 2018. Members of the Advisory Committee represent a diverse cross-section of staff, students and community members including the president of UNE Student Association, International students, Academic Staff, Professional Staff, UNE Senior Counsellor and Psychologist and the Acting Health Service Manager Child Young People Family Team Armidale Community Health Service. A representative from the local sexual assault service has been added as a member to the Advisory Committee.</p>	<p>The Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee will continue to meet on a bi-monthly basis. The meetings discuss updates on actions and their effectiveness in meeting the Report's recommendations. The discussions also identify future strategies for tackling sexual assault and harassment and engaging staff and students in positive change. Evidence and case studies from within the Australian university sector and internationally will also be examined to generate ideas for future action.</p> <p>Photographs and biographies of Advisory Committee member profiles are being published on the university's web page, with the intention of having each member of the committee easily identifiable to students, staff and community members.</p>
<p>2. <i>Develop a plan for addressing the drivers of sexual assault and sexual harassment accompanied by an education program and communications</i></p>	<p>A number of training opportunities and awareness-raising communications activities have been implemented since August 2017.</p> <p>The University implemented a panel discussion session, featuring expert panel members, on Consent, bystander intervention, and available support services for students during Wellness Week at the beginning of the 2018 academic calendar.</p>	<p>An online consent training course is being made available to all interested staff and students, and will allow participants to complete training at their own pace. The University is in the process of exploring suitable training packages to be delivered face-to-face for staff and students regarding consent.</p> <p>Options to deliver training targeted at bystanders to sexual assault and sexual harassment are also being explored, and aim to be implemented in the second half of 2018.</p>

	<p>Face to face training has also been delivered for specifically identified staff members and students as first responders to disclosures of sexual violence or assault (see Recommendation 5 below).</p> <p>The University has also organised a number of forums, guest speakers and promotional events to convey the key messages and raise awareness of the Respect. Now. Always. campaign. Sex Discrimination Commissioner Ms Kate Jenkins attended UNE in April 2018, to speak to staff and students about the Change the Course Report and cultural change. Dr Renee Hamilton from Universities Australia attended Wellness Week and gave a talk about Respect. Now. Always to the new students and residential fellows, and participated in a Q and A panel. Posters, banners, stickers and other promotional materials featuring key messages from the Respect. Now. Always campaign can be found throughout campus and college residences.</p> <p>The University has also engaged the local Liquor Accord to help address the role of alcohol in sexual assault and sexual harassment on campus and within the township.</p> <p>The University, through UNE Life, has taken ownership of the University Safety and Security service, and has imposed best practise for security and service delivery.</p> <p>College event management has been reviewed and brought into line with best practise, to meet the legislative</p>	<p>In addition to formal training packages, the University will continue to harness opportunities at regular and ad hoc events held on campus and in the community to promote the messages of Respect. Now. Always.</p> <p>During Wellness Week, which is catered to new first year students, a Respect. Now. Always. programme will remain part of the agenda in future years. This includes training and education, and special guest speakers to raise awareness about consent, sexual assault and harassment and respectful relationships. These events will also make students aware of support services available to them and how to take advantage of them.</p> <p>The evidence has shown how central alcohol is in many instances of sexual assault. As such, UNE will continue to work closely with college Heads to reduce the reliance on alcohol-related sponsorship of college events and sporting teams. The objective of this work is to remove sponsorship models that include incentives for and promotion of alcohol consumption from college students.</p> <p>The UNE Bus shuttle service continues to run, and has had a strong take-up of students so far. Regular reviews of the service will be conducted to identify usage patterns, improvements to the service and to increase the safety of students. UNE plans to continue providing this service to ensure safety of students commuting to and from campus and town centre.</p>
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<p>3. <i>Take action to ensure information about reporting avenues and support services is widely disseminated and easily accessible. Evaluate actions to ensure activities have increased awareness.</i></p>	<p>Information about support services and contact information has been added to the UNE Safety mobile app, which is targeted at providing key contact information to ensure safety on campus. Promotional stickers, posters, banners and other materials with clearly visible contact information have been disseminated, with a special focus on targeting new enrolments during wellness week and orientation week activities.</p> <p>The UNE web presence for the Respect. Now. Always. campaign, and also the security and safety support services has been boosted. An anonymous question and answer function has also been built on the web page, where students and staff can ask questions anonymously. Banners and posters featuring information for support</p>	<p>The UNE Respect. Now. Always. web page will continue to be updated and monitored regularly. This ensures that all support service details are up-to-date and easily found. Information for support services will also be located and maintained on other web pages within the UNE site.</p> <p>The anonymous Q and A function will continue to be monitored and updated.</p> <p>Support services will continue to be advertised during University events, with posters, stalls, banners, stickers and other media. These events include Open Day, Orientation Week, Wellness Week and other special events. Installations will be present and updated regularly in college residences with information about the availability of support services and reporting avenues.</p>

	<p>services have been installed in university residential colleges.</p> <p>Training and orientation activities for new and existing residential students have featured information about support services within and external to UNE. Wellness week is a week of information and training provided to new residential college students to prepare them for University life. This year, Wellness Week promoted information about alcohol consumption, mental health, education about hazing and sexual harassment and sexual assault.</p>	<p>Emails to all staff and students will continue to be used to provide future updates on available support services and any changes to them.</p> <p>Student Leaders in colleges will continue to be briefed on all relevant contact and support service information, including new cohorts of student leaders.</p> <p>Other communication channels, including podcast interviews, are being explored in conjunction with students, to promote the messages of the Respect. Now. Always. campaign and inform students of available support.</p> <p>Data on the volume of reports and queries through all of these channels, including web page visits, submissions to the anonymous Q and A function, and reports through the anonymous reporting form will be collected and presented to the Vice-Chancellor on a 6-monthly basis.</p>
<p>4. <i>Universities must take steps to ensure that students who experience sexual assault or sexual harassment have access to specialist support, from a service provider with required expertise and training in this area. Within a year of the release of this report, the University should commission an independent, expert-led</i></p>	<p>The University has, and continues to investigate external and independent experts to review the existing university policies and response pathways in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment.</p> <p>The University has commenced an interim internal audit of existing university policies and response pathways in relation to sexual assault and harassment. This audit will supplement the external and independent review.</p> <p>Work has been done to map the existing response pathways to enable a clearer understanding from students of the courses of action available to them.</p>	<p>UNE has recently implemented a dedicated after-hours counselling service available to all students. The UNE Safety App has a link to this service for students to access easily on their mobiles. This will continue to be promoted via a number of communication channels.</p> <p>At the conclusion of the interim internal review into existing university policies and response pathways, the University will consider the recommendations and findings, and engage an external expert to conduct an independent review.</p> <p>Several business areas within the University are already reviewing their own policies and response pathways to identify</p>

<p><i>review of existing university policies and response pathways in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment.</i></p>		<p>improvements, and this will continue once the review's recommendations are released.</p> <p>A flow chart of procedures and response pathways once a disclosure is made will be published on the web in the second half of 2018, so that people are empowered to make their own choices about how and where they can report incidents and what will happen after they report.</p>
<p>5. <i>Universities should conduct an assessment to identify staff and student representatives most likely to receive disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment and ensure these staff members and student representatives receive training</i></p>	<p>The University has identified a cohort of 160 staff and students who will be first responders to disclosures of sexual assault and harassment. These people have completed <i>Responding With Compassion</i> training, delivered face-to-face by Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia.</p>	<p>Online delivery of the responding to disclosure training will be made available to any interested staff and students to undertake at their own pace. This will be an ongoing service made available to anyone wanting to do the training.</p> <p>Further face-to-face training will be delivered at least once a year, including refresher training for previously identified first responders. Contact information for trained first responders is being collected for publication on the UNE web page.</p>
<p>6. <i>Universities should ensure that information about individual disclosures and reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment is collected and stored confidentially and used for continuous improvement of processes.</i></p>	<p>An anonymous reporting form has been established and linked on the university's Respect. Now. Always. web page, to receive de-identified and confidential reports of instances of sexual assault and sexual harassment. This form can also be accessed via the University's safety app.</p> <p>The submissions are responded to in a regular and timely fashion, and information is stored confidentially. Anonymity is retained for any reports submitted through the portal.</p>	<p>The anonymous reporting form continues to receive submissions and is accessible on the UNE web page. It will continue to be monitored daily, and submissions will continue to be stored confidentially.</p> <p>De-identified data from the reporting form will be exported at regular intervals and presented to the Vice-Chancellor. Reports will contain analysis on common issues and trends, and recommendations to address these. This information will be</p>

<p><i>At least every six months, Vice-Chancellors should be provided with de-identified reports of this data, including trends or identifiable concerns which arise, along with recommendations for any necessary improvements to processes.</i></p>		<p>complemented by data from other reporting mechanisms, including complaints and grievance procedures.</p>
<p><i>7. Within six months of the release of the national report, but as soon as possible, universities should conduct an audit of university counselling services, with a particular focus on the ability to support students who have been affected by sexual assault or sexual harassment</i></p>	<p>The University engaged the Internal Audit and Risk Unit to undertake an audit of university counselling services, with the support of a local expert. The audit's recommendations have been adopted by the University, and some actions have already been implemented in response. For example, extra counselling resources have been recruited, and the physical location of the counselling services has been moved to increase access and anonymity.</p>	<p>The University is monitoring implementation of the internal audit's recommendations, and will consider some of them more comprehensively upon completion of the independent audit of residential colleges later in 2018.</p> <p>The counselling service has also increased staffing numbers, by employing one casual counsellor and another counsellor on a 6 month fixed contract. The future staffing levels of the University's counselling services will be reassessed after the audit into residential colleges is completed and recommendations are made.</p> <p>An online booking system is being developed to help students access counselling services without calling a phone number.</p>
<p><i>8. Universities should engage an independent body to conduct the National university student survey of sexual assault and sexual</i></p>	<p>Universities Australia has committed to repeating the survey and the University of New England will again support this effort.</p>	<p>The University has agreed to support the undertaking of this survey.</p>

<p><i>harassment at three yearly intervals to track progress in reducing the prevalence of these incidents at a sector-wide level</i></p>		
<p>9. <i>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</i></p>	<p>The Australian Human Rights Commission has been engaged to conduct the independent audit of the UNE residential system. The audit commenced in March 2018, and has already involved face-to-face interviews, physical inspections and a desktop review.</p>	<p>The Australian Human Rights Commission is currently in the process of undertaking the audit for UNE's residential colleges. It is expected that the audit findings and recommendations will be presented to the University in October 2018.</p> <p>The audit report will include findings from focus groups with current college residents, online submission, a confidential survey, physical inspection of residential colleges and a desktop review of policies and procedures, and incident reports from colleges.</p>