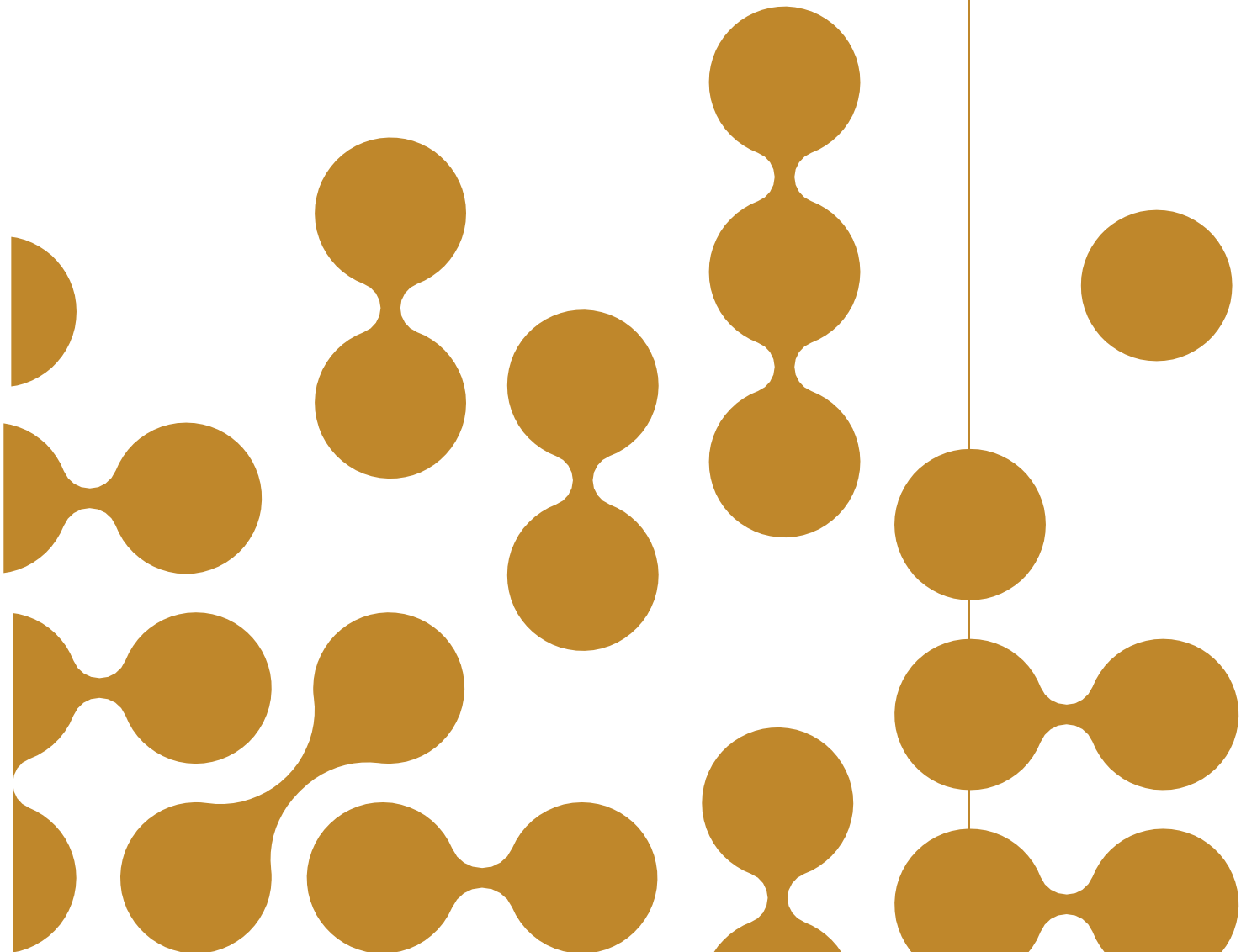
Student Safety and Wellbeing

Australian National University

Action Plan V4.0 - last updated October 2022



Background

Universities Australia commissioned an independent national survey – the National Student Safety Survey (NSSS) – conducted by the Social Research Centre into the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault in Universities across Australia. Wednesday 23 March 2022, the NSSS results were released. In alignment with the results, we would like to provide an update on what the Australian National University (ANU) has been doing to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.

Firstly, ANU acknowledges all students who participated in the survey and we believe that understanding student views and experiences will help us to better prevent, respond, and act upon, these important issues. We are committed to ensuring the University's study and work environment is a safe, respectful and inclusive place. The health, safety and wellbeing of our staff and students is at the forefront of our work.

The Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan aims to improve the safety and wellbeing of all students including student groups identified in the NSSS as experiencing higher levels of sexual misconduct including, female students, sexually diverse students, students with a disability and younger students aged 18 – 21 years. This will be achieved through all activities undertaken under each stream including strengthening our policies, availability and awareness of support available and education and training.

Although the University has taken progressive steps to meet the recommendations found within the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Change the Course Report* and the *ANU Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy (SVPS)*, it has been acknowledged that we must continue to do better in the complex space, that is gendered violence prevention and response. As a result, in September 2021, the SVPS Taskforce was established to form an integrated response to progress the work in the SVPS, the *Broken Promises Report*, the Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) taskforce and the results from the NSSS. As part of this Taskforce, a three-phased action plan was developed and endorsed by ANU Senior Management Group to support with rebuilding the University's internal capability. The taskforce was developed to support prevention and response activities, and mapping out a way for reporting on disclosure data and SASH in a transparent and meaningful way.

Phase 1 of the action plan focused on rebuilding capacity and was timed to conclude at the end of 2021. During this phase ANU committed to continue to support the NSSS and strengthen the University's support mechanism already in operation. This included establishing the Student Safety and Wellbeing Team through the recruitment of several key positions. This including three Case Managers who work to support victim/survivors who disclose to the University, a Practice Lead and the Senior Manager Student Safety and Wellbeing to lead the team. At this phase, an independent review of the SVPS was commenced by Lyn Walker. Lyn was responsible for leading the review and assessing the SVPS and actions and make recommendations on how to progress the SVPS in the coming years.

Phase 2 commenced in early 2022 and built on the foundations of Phase 1, with a focus on ANU Responses. As part of this, on Wednesday 2 March 2022, ANU published its first Annual Report on Sexual Misconduct Disclosures & Reports. The Annual Report provides information on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment disclosures and Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment reports that have been lodged with ANU, due to sexual assault and/or sexual harassment between 2019 and 2021. The Annual Report shows that, year on year, more individuals are coming forward to report and disclose incidents of sexual misconduct.

During this phase, ANU also launched the Orientation-week Reach Out Campaign which included the development and distribution of smart stickers that connected students and staff to the support services available. Concurrently, during semester 1 2022 the Respectful Relationships Unit undertook work to improve the consent training program. The training is an expert led series of sessions that contextualises the Consent Matters Module. As of 2022 both the Consent Matters Module and the Enlivening Consent training are compulsory for all students who are moving into ANU Residences for the first time.

Phase 3 is the phase we are currently implementing and it will continue to build on previous phases. This phase will include the launch of a Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan, which will be fully implemented by Q1 2024, with some key initiatives being targeted for Semester 2 2022. Phase 3 will specifically target online safety across seven streams of work and will reflect the priority areas based on the data from the National Student Safety Survey.

This Action Plan has been developed as a dedicated plan that will support the further strengthening of the University's education and prevention, reporting, disclosures, case management, institutional response and reporting initiatives. There will be seven major streams of work that will be contained in the Student Safety and Wellbeing two-year program. These streams of work will be implemented with the input of key internal stakeholders including student representative groups, and staff who work in student support services. ANU will be making significant investments in staffing in ANU Residences, recruitment of new case managers, making consent training a mandatory part of students' enrolment and embedding a zero-tolerance approach in ANU culture, including policies, language, training and disciplinary procedures.

Governance

The Student Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group has been established to give effect to the Independent Assessor's Report of the ANU Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy.

The steering group membership is:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and University Experience) (Chair)
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
- Chief Residential Services and Operations Officer
- University Registrar
- Deputy Chief People Officer (Strategy and Planning)
- Director, Engagement and Strategic Communications
- Director, University Engagement
- Senior Manager, Student Safety and Wellbeing
- Student Representatives (x2)

Other key stakeholders and corresponding members:

- Chief Operating Officer
- Director, Office of the Vice Chancellor
- Head, Equity and Belonging
- Manager, Respectful Relationship Unit
- Senior Advisor to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and University Experience)

The steering group will inform decision-making around implementation of this Plan. The Plan is linked to seven major streams of work that have been proposed as part of the Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan, namely:

Stream of work 1: Implement all the recommendations from the SVPS Independent Assessor's Report, through a two-year program of work.
Stream of work 2: Ensure that staff are able to access effective and supported training on Student Safety and Wellbeing at ANU.
Stream of work 3: All newly enrolled students have completed consent-training modules and ANU is piloting new prevention education programs with a focus on online safety.
Stream of work 4: Significantly invest in more professionally trained staff in residences and implement within the context of a strengthened operations model.
Stream of work 5: Expand the case management support from Student Safety and Wellbeing team to assist in Student Residences, the reporting process and in student groups.
Stream of work 6: Introduce oversight mechanism for University Council to oversee these recommendations and to keep the University accountable.
Stream of work 7: Strengthen and document procedures for responding to victim/survivors and perpetrators and disseminate widely across the University

Each stream of work will have a stream lead who will report into the steering group. The required support, communication, resources, and ongoing commitments have been taken into consideration in the draft of this document and set of deliverables. The plan has been developed by the University Experience Division in conjunction with the Student Safety and Wellbeing team and the Respectful Relationship Unit.

1. **Action Table**

Activity		Key Actions	Responsible Officer/Group	Scheduled finish
1. Start implementing all the recommendations from the Independent Assessor's Report (Lyn Walker, 2022).		**2022 NSSS results:** Priority of residential settings aims to address the number of incidents that were reported as having occurred in student accommodation, 26.1% of ANU respondents experienced sexual harassment, and of those, 32.4% experienced this in on-campus accommodation. Students have also outlined a number of suggestions that they wanted to see prioritised as part of the University's response to sexual assault and sexual harassment. These included: - a clear stance against sexual assault/harassment and decisive action and clear consequences for offenders (zero tolerance embedded in the Sexual Misconduct Policy) - educate students about sexual assault/harassment and consent (review current prevention activities including awareness of online harm and safety, redesign consent education for diverse cohorts, redesign promotional activities) - improved safety at residential and academic colleges (develop and review cultural action plans) - clearer, simpler process for reporting sexual assault/harassment (Disclosing Sexual Violence in RRU Sexual Violence Prevention Toolkit) - Listen to/believe/support victims (Disclosing Sexual Violence in RRU Sexual Violence Prevention Toolkit) - Raise awareness of support services available (Disclosing Sexual Violence in RRU Sexual Violence Prevention Toolkit) The RRU Sexual Violence Prevention Toolkit explores the drivers of gender-based violence against women and other historically excluded and marginalised people who are overrepresented in the data.		
1.1	Indicate a zero-tolerance approach in the sexual violence policy.	• Review current policy for improvements • Workshop and draft statement on the concept of Zero Tolerance • Draft new Sexual violence policy • Approve new Sexual violence policy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and University Experience)	Q4 2023
1.2	Prioritise actions within ANU residential settings, while maintaining a whole of organisation approach.	• Establish stream of the Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan • Review cultural action plans in residences.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and University Experience)	Q3 2023
1.3	Strengthen governance, planning, coordination and evaluation systems underpinning strategy implementation.	• Establish new Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee to oversee reforms. • Establish full Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan and associated actions. • Establish new Student Wellbeing at ANU evaluation and reporting framework to identify improvements in service provision. • Publish report as part of the annualised	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and University Experience)	Q1 2023

		sexual misconduct report/student safety and wellbeing report.		
1.4	Tailoring some activities to ensure that actions designed to both respond to and prevent sexual violence are relevant to the needs of students from varying ethnic backgrounds.	• Review current prevention activities, including awareness of online harm and safety. • Redesign consent education modules for diverse cohorts • Explore redesign of promotional activities to include language of origin.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and University Experience)	Q4 2023
1.5	Strengthen development and monitoring of cultural action plans and disseminating information on outputs and outcomes achieved.	• Launch Respectful Relationships Prevention Tool Kit • Colleges to draft cultural action plan for 2023 and promote widely. • Colleges to report on actions as part of the wider report on sexual misconduct report/student safety and wellbeing report.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and University Experience)	Q4 2023
Milestone 1	**Implementation of the Independent Assessor's recommendations**			
2. Ensure that university staff are able to access effective and supported training on Student Safety and Wellbeing at ANU.		**2022 NSSS results:** Increasing consistent and whole of institution approaches to responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment and increasing awareness of support available aims to address some of the main reasons why ANU students who responded to the NSSS did not seek support. Staff training will run concurrent with student training to educate students on what constitutes sexual assault, sexual harassment and consent. Following training, staff and students will understand the supports available to students following an incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment.		
2.1	Greater visibility of student facing systems for non-student facing staff to better identify who is a student facing staff member of the university.	• Identify systems used by student facing staff. • Assess privacy considerations. • Establish preliminary list of student facing staff to pilot training modules.	Chief Information Officer, Registrar, Deputy Chief People Officer (Strategy and Planning)	Q4 2023
2.2	Introduce wider support and clinical supervision of staff who work in student critical incidents.	• Establish clinical governance framework for teams working in and around student critical incidents. • Pilot debriefing services for staff affected. • Evaluate effectiveness.	Deputy Chief People Officer (Safety and Wellbeing) Director, UE, Chief Residential Services and Operations Officer.	Q4 2023
2.3	Review of current training for staff specifically the needs of student facing staff.	• Audit existing training modules for staff. • Establish list of student facing staff and	Deputy Chief People Officer (Strategy and	Q4 2023

		high need areas assistance from DVCA, Registrar and Dean HDR. • Identify times in calendar for formalised training opportunities. • Identify areas of training need for modules. • Identify areas for piloting. • Identify initial costings and budget request • Work with eSafety Commissioner to explore eSafety training for student facing staff.	Planning) Deputy Chief People Officer (Talent and Capability)	
2.4	Pilot new training modules aimed at student facing staff.	• Establish curriculum plan and outcomes. • Assess in-house build v private partnership. • Assess labour resourcing. • Build modules including options for ongoing training/face to face. • Establish completion tracking. • Establish support systems and workplace safety for staff	Deputy Chief People Officer (Strategy and Planning) Deputy Chief People Officer (Talent and Capability)	Q4 2023
2.5	Pilot new on boarding programme for HDR supervisors regarding student safety.	• Establish curriculum plan and outcomes. • Assess in-house build v private partnership. • Assess labour resourcing. • Build modules including options for ongoing training/face to face. • Establish completion tracking.	Dean HDR, Deputy Chief People Officer (Strategy and Planning) Deputy Chief People Officer (Talent and Capability)	Q4 2023
2.6	Implement evaluation framework for training offerings.	• Establish evaluation framework throughout modules delivery. • Publish report as part of the annualise sexual misconduct report/student safety and wellbeing report.	Deputy Chief People Officer (Strategy and Planning) Deputy Chief People Officer (Talent and Capability)	Q4 2023
Milestone 2	**Established staff training modules on Student Safety and Wellbeing.**			

3. Make accessible consent training mandatory for enrolment at ANU and pilot new prevention education programs with a focus in online safety.		**2022 NSSS results:** The development and trialling of new consent training course will address some of the results of the survey including increasing students' confidence in reporting process (with only 26% of ANU respondents being confident in sexual assault reporting process and 28% in sexual harassment reporting processes). The proposed training course will include modules specifically for new on-campus residents to address some of the top suggestions made by ANU respondents on understanding sexual assault and sexual harassment, consent and respectful relationships (including educating students about sexual assault/harassment and consent, clearer/simpler process for reporting sexual assault/harassment, raising awareness of support services available), and to strengthen bystander interventions (50% of students who witness sexual assault and 63% of students who witness sexual harassment did something).		
3.1	Review current consent training, including Epigeum modules.	• Audit existing training modules for students. • Identify times in calendar for formalised training opportunities. • Identify areas of training need for modules. • Identify areas for piloting. • Identify initial costings and budget request	Director, University Experience Respectful Relationship Unit/Student Safety and Wellbeing Team	Q4 2022
3.2	Pilot new consent training modules for undergrad, postgrad and HDR students.	• Scope in house v partnership build for new modules. • Consider ongoing modules and pilot for 2023. • Pilot new modules.	Respectful Relationship Unit/Student Safety and Wellbeing Team/Dean of HDR	Q1 2023
3.3	Administer new completion checks aligned to enrolment.	• Review minimum requirements for completion • Review subject progress policies and rewrite where needed. • Identify opt out procedure. • Identify initial costing for administration of completion and communication planning.	University Registrar's Officer Dean (Academic Quality)	Q1 2023
3.4	Implement evaluation framework for training offerings.	• Establish evaluation framework throughout modules delivery. • Publish report as part of the annualise sexual misconduct report/student safety and wellbeing report.	Director, University Experience	Q3 2023
Milestone 3	**All newly enrolled students have completed consent-training modules and ANU is piloting new prevention education programs.**			

4. Significantly invest in more professionally trained staff in residences and implement within the context of a strengthened operations model.		**2022 NSSS results** This stream aims to further harness the level of safety and respect reported by ANU respondents who live in on-campus accommodation with 88% responding they feel safe at their residence		
4.1	First responder (front facing student roles) training.	• General online all staff training • Specific training for head of hall and residential wellbeing coordinators • Specific training for senior residents and community coordinators	Deputy Chief People Officer (Strategy and Planning) Deputy Chief People Officer (Talent and Capability). Chief Residential Services and Operations Office.	Q1 2023
4.2	Staff wellbeing support and clinical supervision (to also cover students directly impacted or who support a disclose or incident i.e. Senior Resident or Community Coordinator).	• Establish clinical governance framework for teams working in and around student critical incidents. • Pilot debriefing services for staff affected. • Evaluate effectiveness.	Chief Residential Services and Operations Office Student Safety and Wellbeing Team, Head of Clinical Services, Deputy Chief People Officer (Strategy and Planning)	Q2 2023
4.3	Declaration of criminal activity during residential applications.	• Establish legal framework to ensure procedural fairness. • Confirm communications within residential application. • Form governance procedure on appeals process.	Chief Residential Services and Operations Office University Legal Officer, University Registrar Office and University Experience.	Q4 2023
4.4	Resourcing stabilisation and improvement.	• Stabilise existing staffing arrangements within halls – by early July 2022 • Appoint new staff to act as a roving team to provide surge capacity/back-fill when on leave as required – by August 2022 • Seek to pilot after-hours and weekend staffing in residences for Semester 2,	Chief Residential Services and Operations Office	Q2 2023

		2022 with a view to align for with longer term intent for 24/7 operating model		
4.5	Overall residential reform and transformation – student support and wellbeing.		Chief Residential Services and Operations Office Director, UE	Q4 2023 and beyond (2 year scope)
Milestone 4	**Residences are fully staffed with new investments in student support.**			
5. Expand the case management support from Student Safety and Wellbeing team		**2022 NSSS results:** These actions will help address the NSSS results regarding student's confidence levels in ANU complaints and response processes (with less than half of those living in on-campus accommodation having confidence in processes or awareness of support). Increasing awareness of the support available, training for staff on responding to disclosures and increased awareness of complaints processes will aim to support students engage with formal complaints mechanisms – only 3% of victims of sexual harassment and 7% of victims of sexual assault lodged a formal complaint with the ANU. The ANU Sexual Misconduct Disclosure Tool improves the University's understanding of the prevalence and contexts of sexual assault and sexual harassment and enables to University to target support to victim survivors, support persons, witnesses and any third parties. A Case Management System is being considered for introduction in 2023 to support SASH case management.		
5.1	Implement new case management system.	• Review current systems • Align to current systems used by Counselling and Access and Inclusion. • Select new system • Train staff for new system • Commence new case management system.	Senior Manager, Student Safety Wellbeing	Q2 2023
5.2	Introduce new disclosure mechanism that improves access to a case manager.	• Review current process • Improve web information and access • Evaluate new process.	Senior Manager, Student Safety Wellbeing	Q2 2023
5.3	Pilot a new "hub and spoke" model for case managers who are linked to colleges, residential areas and student associations.	• Identify groups to pilot case-management • Hire new case-managers. • Evaluation framework established for pilot. • Implement pilot.	Senior Manager, Student Safety Wellbeing	Q4 2023
5.4	Introduce evaluation and reporting mechanisms for the case management of students.	• Establish client satisfaction survey. • Use annual SASH report to release findings. • Factoring in findings towards internal operational plans for 2023.	Senior Manager, Student Safety Wellbeing	Q4 2022
5.5	Pilot new Sexual Health Nurse.	• Establish new PD and go to market for new role. • Establish clinical governance framework in collaboration with Medical Centre	Senior Manager, Student Safety Wellbeing	Q3 2022

		• Implement booking system. • Commence pilot.		
Milestone 5	**Case Managers are allocated to Residences for in-house support to residents.**			
6. Introduce oversight mechanism for University Council to oversee these recommendations and to keep the University accountable.		**2022 NSSS results** Compared to the sector, ANU respondents reported low agreement on the University's efforts about ensuring student safety, with even lower rates for students who had experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment. Only 25% of ANU students who are victim/ survivors of sexual assault or sexual harassment felt ANU was trying hard to protect the safety of all students. Oversight of this Plan through a Council Committee endeavours to demonstrate the University's commitment to the implementation of the Plan.		
Milestone 6	**Establishment of the Student Wellbeing Council committee with oversight of this Action Plan**			
7. Strengthen and document procedures for responding to victim/survivors and perpetrators and disseminate widely across the University		**2022 NSSS results** Strengthening and disseminating procedures aim to increase the confidence of students in proceeding with reporting sexual assault and sexual harassment. While ANU's response rate was larger than the sector average (15.9%), only 26% of ANU respondents indicating they were moderately or extremely confident" in the ANU sexual harassment reporting process and 28% in the sexual assault reporting process.		
7.1	Strengthen and document procedures for responding to victim/survivors and perpetrators and disseminate widely across the University.	• Review existing policies related to student code of conduct, student critical incidents and the sexual misconduct policy. • Improve visibility of current processes for victim/survivor and alleged perpetrators. • Create new collateral and promotion tools to explain the processes for victim/survivor and alleged perpetrators.	University Registrar's Office and the University Experience Division.	Q4 2023
7.2	Review reporting for online safety including greater collaboration with the eSafety commissioner	• Review available links available for students to report online abuse. • Ensure any new protocols for developed for victim/survivor and alleged perpetrators understand the role of the eSafety commissioner.	University Registrar's Office and the University Experience Division.	Q4 2023
Milestone 7	**Strengthen and document procedures for responding to victim/survivors and perpetrators and disseminate widely across the University**			

2. Reporting, Communication and Review points

The Operational plan will be reviewed and updated at the following points:

1. January 2023
2. June 2023
3. January 2024

A dedicate communications plan has been developed with regular updates throughout the year.