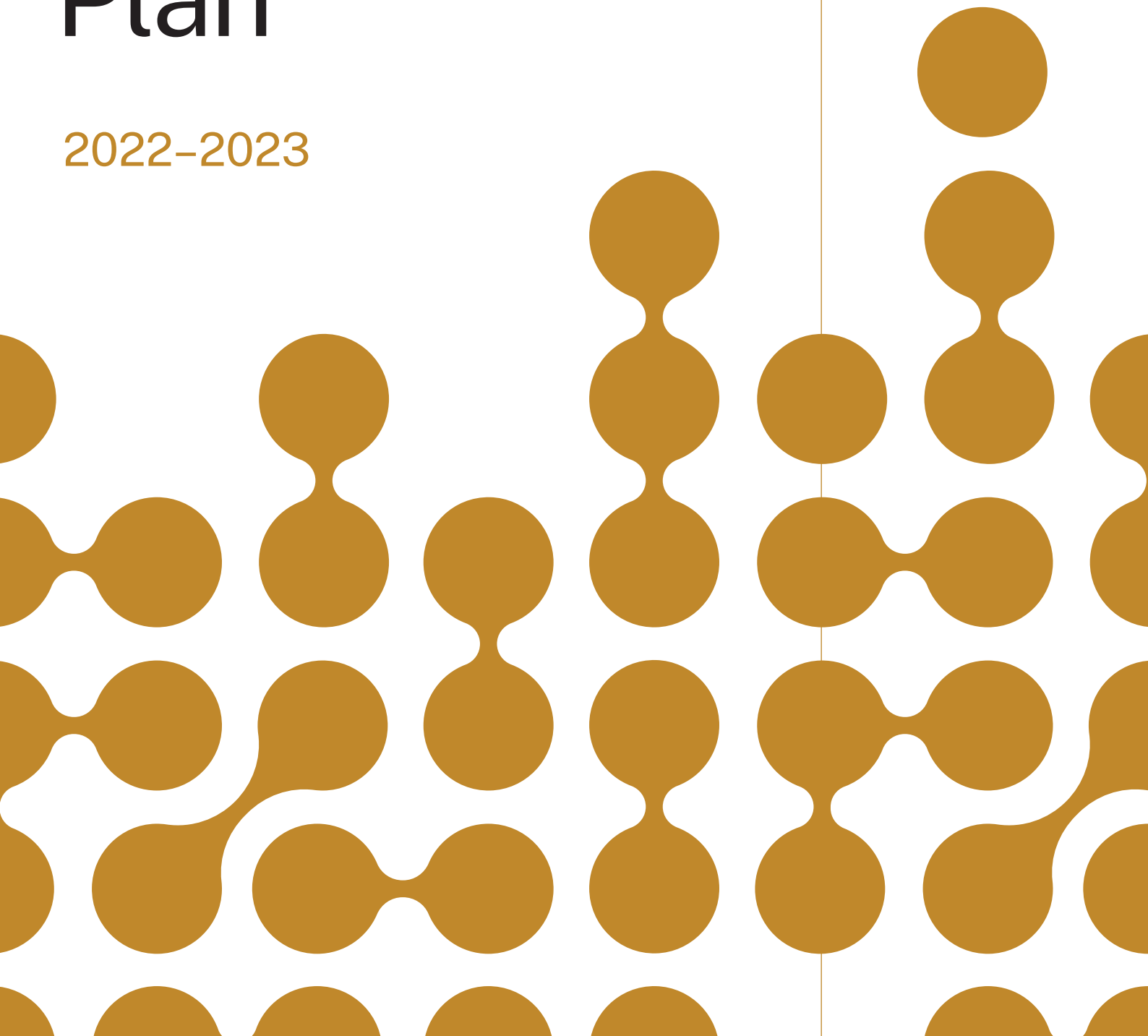
ANU Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan

Australian National University

2022–2023



Contents

Background 02

Governance 04

Snapshot: University-wide actions to date 06

Action Plan 08

- Action 1 08
- Action 2 10
- Action 3 12
- Action 4 14
- Action 5 16
- Action 6 18
- Action 7 19

Background

On Wednesday 23 March 2022 Universities Australia released results of an independent national survey entitled the National Student Safety Survey (NSSS). Conducted by the Social Research Centre, the NSSS investigated the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault in Universities across Australia. This Student Safety and Wellbeing plan provides an update on initiatives, activities and actions undertaken by the Australian National University (ANU) since the release of the NSSS results.

ANU acknowledges all students who participated in the NSSS, as understanding student views and experiences helps to better prevent, respond, and act upon these important issues. We are committed to ensuring the University's study and work environments, both in person and online are safe, respectful and inclusive. The health and wellbeing of our cohorts is at the forefront of our work.

The Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan aims to improve the safety and wellbeing of all students including those student groups identified by 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 strengthening our policies, raising awareness, offering broader support services and making education and training on these topics readily available.

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, a 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. A three-phased action plan was developed and endorsed by the ANU Senior Management Group to support rebuilding the University's internal capability. The Taskforce was developed to support prevention and response activities, and to devise a map for reporting on disclosure data and SASH in a transparent and meaningful way.

Phase 1

This phase of the action plan focused on rebuilding capacity and concluded at the end of 2021. During this time, 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. These included three Case Managers 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 to assess the University's strategies and actions and to make recommendations on how to progress in the coming years.

Phase 2

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 Report provides information on all incidents that have been lodged with ANU between 2019 and 2021. Findings int he report demonstrate that year on year, more individuals are coming forward to report and disclose incidents of sexual misconduct.

Phase 3

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 (SVPS) and the Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan.

The steering group membership is:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (Chair)
- 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 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

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:

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 conjuction with the Student Safety and Wellbeing Team, the Respectful Relationships Unit and the Residential Experience Division.

Snapshot: University-wide actions to date

Since the launch of the Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan in March 2022, 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).

Established the Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee of Council with an independent chair and a new Student Safety and Wellbeing reporting framework for University decision makers.

Online disclosure tool reviewed to align with trauma informed and person-centred practices and significantly reduced the steps for a student to make contact with support.

Student Safety and Wellbeing team staff increased by four to a total of seven FTE, including three extra Case Managers (total now four) and the introduction of a Nurse Practitioner (women's health and sexual health) as part of our clinical services.

Student Safety and Wellbeing Case Manager allocated as a pilot to participating student residences to provide a central point of contact with Student Safety and Wellbeing team.

Finalisation of the first ANU Gender Equality Strategy, launch of the Rights, Relationships and Respect Prevention tool kit plus an increase in Residential Community Safety Officers piloted in student residences.

Reach-Out Campaign launched during semester 1 2022 O-Week to improve awareness and connection of students and staff to support services. New training opportunities for staff including the new 'Supporting students in distress' resources.

Sexual harassment and sexual assault webpage revamped to clarify support available and disclosure and reporting options.

The ANU released the second Annual Sexual Misconduct Reports and Disclosures Report in May 2023. Additionally the formal reporting of student misconduct webpage released clarifying the report process under the Discipline Rule with clear guidelines for complainants and respondents.

The Accommodational Declaration developed for implementation in Q1, 2023. Residential students are asked to disclose any criminal convictions, pending charges and unspent criminal convictions against the following categories:

- Sexual offences.
- Serious violence or assault.
- In-person/cyber stalking, harassment or bullying.

ANU Rights, Relationships and Respect education program was developed in 2022 and released in February 2023.
A bespoke program comprising a one hour online module followed by face-to-face workshops with students in residence. Early feedback from students who have completed the module includes:

- 88% agreeing the course had helped them understand concepts more clearly,
- 95% trusting the ANU takes all forms of sexual assault and sexual harassment seriously.

A review of the ANU Discipline Rule by Honorary Associate-Professor Miriam Gani, ANU College of Law and Former ANU Dean of Students. The review included consultation with students and staff, and a consideration of best practice from across the sector. Draft recommendations are currently being considered for implementation during 2023-2024.

Action Plan

Action 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 to be embedded in the reviewed 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)

1.1 Indicate a zero-tolerance approach in the sexual violence policy.

Key actions	Responsibility	Completion
• 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 (Academic)	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 (Academic)	Q3 2023

1.3 Strengthen governance, planning, coordination and evaluation systems underpinning strategy implementation.		
Key actions	**Responsibility**	**Completion**
• 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 reports as part of the annualised sexual misconduct report/student safety and wellbeing report.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Q1 2023
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 (Academic)	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 (Academic)	Q4 2023

Milestone 1: Implementation of the Independent Assessor's recommendations.

Action 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.

Key actions	Responsibility	Completion
• 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, University Experience 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 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.	Deputy Chief People Officer (Strategy and Planning) Deputy Chief People Officer (Talent and Capability) Director, University Experience	Q4 2023

2.4 Pilot new training modules aimed at student facing staff.		
Key actions	**Responsibility**	**Completion**
• 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.

Action 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.

Key actions	Responsibility	Completion
• 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 annual 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.

Action 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.

Key actions	Responsibility	Completion
• 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)	Q1 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.

Key actions	Responsibility	Completion
• 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, 2022 with a view to align for with longer term intent for 24/7 operating model.	Chief Residential Services and Operations Office	Q2 2023

Milestone 4: Residences are fully staffed with new investments in student support.

Action 5: Expand the case management support from Student Safety and Wellbeing team.

2022 NSSS Results

TThese 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.

Key actions	Responsibility	Completion
5.1 Implement new case management system.		
• Review current systems. • Align to current systems used by Counselling and Accessibility. • 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 • Implement booking system. • Commence pilot.	Senior Manager, Student Safety Wellbeing	Q3 2022

Milestone 5: Case Managers are allocated to Residences for in-house support to residents.

Action 6: Introduce regulatory 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.

Action 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.

Key actions	Responsibility	Completion
• 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 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 University Experience Division	Q4 2023

Milestone 7: Strengthen and document procedures for responding to victim/survivors and perpetrators and disseminate widely across the University.

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