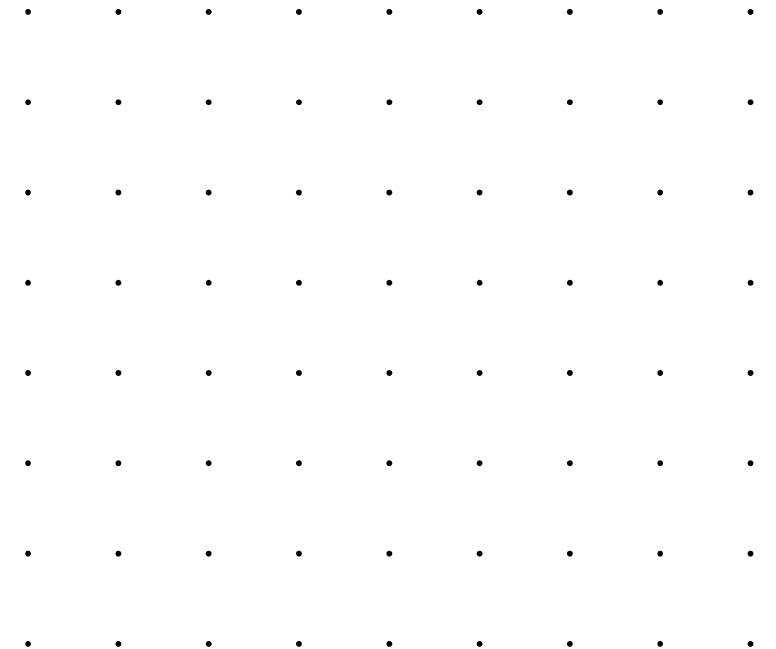


Respect. Now. Always

Action Plan 2022-2023

Professor Sarah Maddison



National Student Safety Survey

The National Student Safety Survey (NSSS) ran across the Australian university sector in late 2021, with results released on Wednesday 23 March 2022. Like the foundational survey from 2016, the 2021 NSSS collected data on the prevalence and nature of university student experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Swinburne's findings

Of the 1,054 Swinburne students who responded to the survey, 12.9% had experienced sexual harassment since starting university, with 3.7% experiencing sexual assault in the past 12 months. 10.1% of the 'differently-described' gender students who responded to the survey have experienced sexual harassment, as had 4% and 2.5% of those who identified as women and men respectively.

We want our campuses to be a place that is welcoming and safe to all students, yet for some students they are not. 47.3% of the sexual harassment incidents were experienced in general campus areas, and 23.6% in lecture theatres and computer labs. 61.1% of students experiencing sexual harassment knew some or all of the perpetrators involved.

It was concerning that only 19.2% of students who were sexually harassed sought support or assistance, and more alarming that 52.3% and 54.5% of students who experienced sexual harassment and sexual assault respectively knew nothing or very little about how to make a complaint (54.4% in the circumstance of sexual assault). Similarly, 47.8% and 43.9% of student who experienced sexual harassment and sexual assault respectively knew nothing or very little about how to seek support or assistance. This was similar to the rest of the sector and clearly demonstrates that more needs to be done to ensure that all students know how to report, seek support and have an understanding of information and resources available to them.

Swinburne's response

The Respect. Now. Always. Taskforce will be reactivated to harness the university community to improve our performance. This RNA Action Plan, developed in consultation student leaders of the Student Representative Council and Swinburne Student Union, and the Safer Communities team, outlines the actions we will take across four key focus areas:

1. Improving awareness,
2. Improving education,
3. improving service provision, and
4. Gaining further insights.

Focus Area 1: Improving Awareness

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
1.1	Develop a student comms plans to both reactivate the RNA campaign and ensure a set of comms throughout the year to raise awareness of RNA activities and report and support available.	Comms	Pending	A "One Swinburne" approach is being considered to unify staff and student communications.
	Regular and continual induction sessions by Safer Community to different student cohorts.	Safer Community	Complete	Inductions arranged on a per request basis and during campaign periods. Work is ongoing.
	Regular and continual promotion of the Safer Community webpage, factsheets and resources to students via various channels.	Comms	Progress	Need to be integrated into overarching comms plan.
	Display Safer Community's existing sexual assault and sexual harassment posters, focusing on where students hang out on campus (e.g., Late Lab, Library, Atrium, Junction, bathrooms) to inform how and where to report sexual harm concerns.	FSG	Progress	Some posters on display in bathrooms. Digital screens preferred over physical posters.
	Explore display of student support and report options within teaching and learning units in Canvas (e.g., via banners or support option tab in Canvas).	LTU	Progress	Discussions have taken place, banners may not be suitable.
1.2	Explore inclusion of a "Safety on Campus" link to the Swinburne homepage (mirroring the 'Your Safety at Swinburne' tile on the Student Login page).	DXP	Complete	
	Improve visibility of online reporting form on Safer Community's webpage.	DXP / Safer Community	Complete	
	Improve online reporting form layout (e.g., change from fillable fields to survey format, which has shown to increase form completion rates; clarification of anonymous reporting option).	DXP / Safer Community	Progress	Proposal submitted to Web Development and added to the backlog for review.
1.3	Campaign to ensure students know about the App (built into RNA comms plan), and lock the "Staying Safe" tile to the home page	Comms	Complete	

Focus Area 1: Improving Awareness

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
1.4	Remove outdated signage and install clearly visible physical signages guiding students to the Women's Room and Queer Space at the Junction.	FSG	Complete	
1.5	Review all channels including to expand and improve communication of campaigns to students.	Comms	Complete	
	Install poster boards to offer an additional communications channel for student campaigns. Can use Safer Community's existing posters to minimise cost.	FSG	Complete	Digital screens utilised instead.
1.6	Campaign to increase students' understanding of Security services, including requesting a security escort around campus at night or if feeling unsafe.	Comms / Security	Pending	To be integrated into Coms plan.
	Security to be present during O-week, including the International student orientation events, and during Welcome Back Week .	Security	Complete	
	Security to be trained in responding to student sexual harm disclosures.	Safer Community / Security	Complete	Security staff required to complete training during onboarding on gender-based violence, inappropriate behaviours , escalation avenues and responding to disclosures.
1.7	Development of resources (including written guidelines, webinars) that increase staff and student awareness on how to respond to and support someone who has disclosed sexual harm. Consideration to be given around making the information compulsory (e.g., integrate into updated Consent Matters equivalent compliance module).	Safer Community	Complete	Integrated into Talking about Consent course for all students. Staff encouraged to complete ELMO module.
	Promotion of Safer Community's new and existing resources around responding to disclosures via various platforms and build into RNA comms plan	Comms	Pending	Comms plan postponed

Focus Area 1: Improving Awareness

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
1.8	Ensure our messaging and awareness around sexual assault and sexual harassment, and available support options, speaks to younger cohorts (e.g. Swinburne Secondary Programs, first year students).	Comms	Complete	Support options are communicated clearly and accessible to all Swinburne students.
	Deliver workshop/induction sessions to staff who engage with younger cohorts around appropriate response to sexual harm disclosures.	Safer Community	Complete	Ongoing roll out of induction program.
1.9	Integrate information around Safer Community in welcome/induction packs to Residential students.	Residential Services	Complete	
	Safer Community induction sessions and posters to be delivered and installed in Residences.	Residential Services / Safer Community	Complete	
	Ensure all targeted campaigns in the RNA comms plan focus on Residential students	Residential Services	Complete	
1.10	Create resources (e.g., factsheets, bitesize recordings) on consent, targeted towards men (e.g., specific examples of what consent looks like).	Safer Community	Complete	
	Review existing Consent Matters module and identify areas of improvement.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Create content for bespoke Swinburne modules on consent and respectful relationships.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Ensure all resources and initiatives highlight the gendered nature of sexual harm incidents, and the responsibility of each individual to create a safe and respectful environment.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Continual and regular promotion of relevant resources to student and staff via various channels.	Comms	Progress	Resource promotion occurs with campaigns, but a unified comms plan is needed for scheduling and channel oversight.

Focus Area 1: Improving Awareness

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
1.11	Review and update Student Charter where appropriate.	Governance	Pending	
	Communicate messaging and intent behind Student Charter changes to students and staff.	Comms	Pending	

Focus Area 2: Improving Education

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
2.1	Ensure all commencing students complete the Consent Matters module.	DVC(EEE)	Progress	Bespoke module of Consent is live, with all students auto-enrolled. SC is collaborating with DVC, Comms, and IT to enforce compliance.
	Utilise the announcements feature of Canvas in Consent Matters to promote student engagement; and encourage enrolment to the Safer Community Canvas.	Safer Community	Complete	
2.2	Safer Community and Security to be present throughout international student orientation, O-week, and Welcome Back Week to highlight Swinburne's expectations, culture and values.	Safer Community / Security	Complete	
	Ensure international student orientation programs run by ISA include issues of consent in their cultural awareness programs.	International Student Advisory	Complete	
2.3	In addition to an Acknowledgement to Country being visible in classes (on campus and online via Canvas), a statement about safety on campus and how to seek support to be included in all Swinburne units.	DVC(EEE) / LTU	Progress	Implementation is possible, but more information is needed on the appropriate messaging.
2.4	Integrate bystander training in all Safer Community information sessions to students.	Safer Community	Complete	
2.5	Provide sexual harassment and sexual assault active bystander training for student representatives and club leaders.	Safer Community	Progress	SC is promoting training to student leaders, with a pilot session during Respect at Uni and TAFE weeks in March and April 2024.
2.6	Swinburne Student Life, Safer Communities and others areas to assist in supporting the Be A Better Human campaign throughout 2022 and beyond; build into RNA comms plan. Consider changing the name of Be A Better Human to ensure consistent language.	Comms, Safer Community	Complete	No longer running BaBH campaign. Instead focusing on Respect at Uni/Tafe.

Focus Area 2: Improving Education

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
2.7	Redesign the sexual harassment and sexual assault factsheet to include specific support options relating to individuals who are gender diverse, sexuality diverse, have a disability, from CALD backgrounds, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Collaboration with internal support services around content for student and staff resources and awareness initiatives (e.g., inductions, workshops). Services include the SSU (Queer rep), Gender Agenda, AccessAbility, Moondani Toombadool Centre, International Student Advisory and Support.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Ensure a gendered lens is adopted throughout sexual assault and sexual harassment resources/initiatives (e.g., most victim/survivors are women and most perpetrators are men; explore gender inequality; attitudes towards women).	Safer Community	Complete	
2.8	Consultation with community based victim/survivor led organisations around existing and future primary prevention initiatives.	Safer Community	Complete	
2.9	Include trigger warnings / disclaimers in relevant learning content to prepare students.	DVC(EEE), Deans and PVC(VET)	Pending	Need to be led by LTU with support from ADEs.

Focus Area 3: Improving Provision of Services

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
3.1	Brief RNA Taskforce on current on campus security arrangements and protocols, including the night bus service.	Security	Complete	Night bus not utilised at this stage.
	Review arrangements for adequacy	RNA Taskforce	Progress	
	Re-engage with local nightlife venues that are frequently attended by students and re-attempt to develop processes for regular communication and improved security.	Security	Progress	
3.2	Brief RNA Taskforce on current public area lighting and open spaces.	FSG	Complete	
	Review arrangements for adequacy.	RNA Taskforce	Complete	
3.3	Brief RNA Taskforce on current Doctors at Swinburne Health Service and any plans to increase availability of women doctors.	Health services	Complete	
	Review medical services arrangements for adequacy.	RNA Taskforce	Complete	
3.4	Brief RNA Taskforce on counselling wait times and triage process and consider increased support for access for sexual assault and sexual harassment	Counselling services	Complete	
	Explore return of sexual assault counsellor (e.g., ECASA) at the Wellbeing service.	Health services	Progress	Request made to ECASA, but due to resourcing issues, will revisit in the second half of the year.
	Review counselling services arrangements for adequacy.	RNA Taskforce	Progress	

Focus Area 3: Improving Provision of Services

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
3.5	Clearly outline reporting avenues for sexual harm incidents to Residential students (including information around Safer Community) in induction/welcome packs and/or sessions.	Residential Services	Complete	
	Provide education around security services to Residential students for after hours assistance. Consider how often Security patrol residential areas and accountability measures.	Security	Complete	
	Make improvements to processes and regulations around student residential advisor election and conduct.	Residential Services	Complete	
3.6	Continue communication to staff and students around Safer Community's victim/survivor and consent-based approach to handling sexual harm incidents.	Safer Community	Complete	Promotions occur during SC led campaigns and are included in all resources; a Comms plan is needed for ongoing promotion.
	Ongoing promotion of Safer Community as a victim/survivor and consent-based service to students and staff via various channels.	Comms	Pending	Ongoing work. Needs comms plan.
3.7	Education to students and staff around university processes around responding to sexual harm concerns via resources and induction sessions. In particular, the university cannot make a finding of sexual assault, however, there is a priority to ensure staff and student safety and wellbeing.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Consult with subject matter experts internally and externally regarding university's process with handling sexual harm concerns to ensure a trauma-informed approach.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Messaging around university's position regarding sexual harm should be mindful of the phrase "zero-tolerance" as it can result in false promises on courses of action. Ensure transparent messaging and consider focusing on the university's commitment to ensuring safe and respectful environment.	Comms	Complete	

Focus Area 3: Improving Provision of Services

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
3.8	Conduct a yearly review of Swinburne Student Residences Code of Conduct 2018 and update where required to ensure that the formal documentation is reflective of current practice.	Residential Services	Complete	
	Communicate any updates to the Taskforce, staff and students.	Residential Services	Complete	

Focus Area 4: Obtaining Further Insights & Evaluation

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
4.1	Consider opportunities to obtain more frequent information on the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment.	RNA Taskforce	Complete	The suitability of pulse-check surveys needs discussion, as students already complete several surveys. The "Talking about Consent" course captures student attitudes on gender-based violence, including sexual harm.
4.2	Evaluate initial implementation of primary prevention programs (including Consent Matters) and circulate results to taskforce members for comment.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Prepare six-monthly reports to summarise primary prevention programs and evaluate their effectiveness.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Consider results of program evaluations while carrying out primary prevention planning procedure to determine training programs to be implemented in future years.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Evaluate success of communicating support and report options to students (e.g. through reach statistics, reporting data. Self-reported change in knowledge etc.)	Safer Community, Comms	Complete	
	Evaluate success of communicating with staff the requirements for incident investigation (e.g. through reach statistics, reporting data. Self-reported change in knowledge etc.)	Safer Community, Comms	Complete	

Focus Area 4: Obtaining Further Insights & Evaluation

Item	Action plan	Action owner	Status	Notes
4.3	Review initial implementation of the 'Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment: What are the Drivers?' module to determine effectiveness and whether module should be made compulsory for all staff.	Safer Community, Governance	Complete	
	If above module is to be made compulsory, work with relevant stakeholders to determine logistics such as timeframe, delivery platform, sanctions for non-completion etc.	Safer Community, Governance	Complete	
	Determine if further training and resource development is required for staff around responding to disclosures.	Safer Community	Complete	
	Address gaps in training and resources for staff as required, consulting with subject matter experts.	Safer Community	Complete	