

# Murdoch University Respect. Now. Always. Action Plan 2021-2023

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## 1 Overview

In 2016 Universities Australia collaborated with the Australian Human Rights Commission to implement the Respect. Now. Always. (RNA) survey. This survey was intended to capture and shine a light on the experiences of university students across Australia in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Following the national publication of survey results, the Change the Course Report (2017) provided recommendations for all universities to follow and meet.

Murdoch University has embraced these recommendations and, through the previous RNA Action Plans, committed to working towards reducing and preventing incidents and impacts of all forms of sexual harm (sexual assault, abuse, exploitation and harassment) experienced by students.

For the past five years, the Vice Chancellor’s RNA Advisory Group has overseen the development, progress and review of the much needed actions to promote safety, for the whole university community which includes students, staff and people that interact with all Murdoch Campuses, both in Australia and in our transnational locations.

This investment into making a difference for all current and future students has resulted in a range of positive outcomes including



- Creating a confidential and anonymous disclosure system, supported by experienced Sexual Harm Support Officers.
- Implementing a new bespoke Sexual Harm Policy that provides a trauma informed approach to respond to and support people who have experienced sexual harm.
- Improving safety and security systems across our campuses
- Implementing education and awareness raising for students and staff (such as training for Active Bystanders; and Understanding Drivers of and responding to Sexual Harm)

Murdoch University's RNA Action Plan 2021-2023 intersects with a range of other strategies across the university, such as

- SAGE Athena SWAN Action Plan
  - in recognising that gender inequity is a primary driver of sexual harm
- Student Wellbeing Strategy
  - in promoting healthy relationships, help seeking and accessible services and information
- Student Success Strategy
  - In fostering sense of belonging, inclusion and enabling wellbeing support

This Action Plan has been developed by the RNA Advisory Group and reviewed by a student focus group, with further input from the Murdoch Student Guild. The Plan seeks to continue progressing and building on our achievements whilst awaiting outcomes of the next National Student Safety Survey.

Quarterly reviews by the Vice Chancellor's Respect Now Always Advisory Group will continue to monitor progress, and report to relevant groups and committees within the University's governance structure.

## 2 Action Plan

Leadership and Governance				
Recommendations		Actions 2021-2023	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date
1.1	Vice Chancellor to take direct responsibility for the implementation of recommendations	Embed leadership KPIs relating to RNA actions and awareness raising within academic discipline groups.	Vice Chancellor/DVCE&E	Q3 2021
1.2	Vice Chancellor to lead an Advisory Group with responsibility for guiding the implementation of the recommendations	V.C.'s RNA Advisory Group to meet quarterly.	Vice Chancellor	Commenced 2017 Ongoing
		Establish and maintain a student advisory group to provide recommendations and feedback to the VC's (Guild to lead)	Guild President/ Guild General Manager	Established Q1 2021/ongoing
1.3	Development of an action plan involving broad consultation from all relevant stakeholders	Action plan in place and reviewed by VC's Advisory Group annually	Vice Chancellor	Ongoing. For review following National Student Safety Survey Results Q2 2022
1.4	Assess and publicly report progress towards implementation of recommendations	Annual report presented to VC's Advisory Group for escalation to Senior Executive Group	Vice Chancellor	Ongoing reports in Q4
		Senior Executive Announcement on RNA progress annually presented via VC's Townhall meeting	Vice Chancellor	Ongoing reports in Q4

## Changing Attitudes & Behaviours

Recommendations	Actions 2021-2023	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date
2.1 Develop an education plan about appropriate behaviours, consent, respectful relationships and bystander intervention for all	Respectful relationships content in student orientation that covers reporting of incidents to be maintained and updated annually	DVCE&E/DVC Colleges	Established in 2018 Ongoing
	Active Bystander Training to be provided to staff and students with annual content review	Dir AW&E	Implemented 2020 Ongoing implementation
	Staff induction includes information on appropriate behaviour as well as response and reporting procedures.	Dir. PCO	Implemented Ongoing
	Skills for responding to disclosures included in range of wellbeing education sessions for staff to reinforce consistent approaches (e.g. Incidental Counsellor training)	Dir. AW&E/Dir. PCO	Implemented 2019 Ongoing review
	Continue implementation of awareness raising initiatives including ongoing educational workshops at key dates throughout academic calendar	Dir. MCO/ Dir AW&E	Ongoing
	Universities Australia/Australian Psychological Society eLearning available for all staff for understanding drivers of and responding to Sexual Harm. Identify staff groups where completion is mandatory and monitor completion rates.	Dir. PCO	Implemented 2020 Ongoing  Review of mandatory completion due Q2 2022
	Universities Australia/Australian Psychological Society eLearning for understanding drivers of and responding to Sexual Harm to be completed by all members of University Leadership Group	Vice Chancellor	Q1 2022
	Face to Face training provided through external provider (Sexual Assault Resource Centre) for staff and students	Dir. AW&E /Dir PCO	Commenced 2018 Ongoing/As required
	Senior Leadership Group to attend Active Bystander training	Vice Chancellor	Q1 2022
	VC's Advisory Group has Communications Sub-Group to ensure effective and timely messaging and a suite of standardised messaging that staff can use to promote expectations of respectful behaviours relating to university activities	Dir. MCO	Established 2020 Ongoing
	Explore implementation of a healthy relationships eLearning module for all commencing students	DVCE&E	Q4 2021

## University Responses to Sexual Assault & Sexual Harassment

Recommendations		Actions 2021-2023	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date
3.1	Disseminate reporting avenues and support services to all	Maintain contemporary and accessible digital content (webpages, Student and staff portal and Murdoch Safe App) for recognising, disclosing, and help seeking for incidents of sexual harm.	Dir. ITS/ Dir. PCO/Dir AW&E	Ongoing
3.2	Develop relationships with external services to enable referral	Identify points of onwards referral and maintain relationships to provide stepped care approach to supporting people who experience sexual harm	Dir AW&E	Ongoing
		Finalise and implement Sexual Harm Risk Assessments for high risk activities and regular university wide assessment of risk (linked to DFAT PSEAH policy)	Dir. Audit & Risk/Dir AW&E	Q3 2021
3.3	Commission an independent expert-led review of university policy and response pathways	Implement an external review of the Sexual Harm policy after 12 months of implementation (no longer than 24months post implementation)	Dir. AQCMP	Q2 2022
3.4	Ascertain effectiveness of existing policies and pathways	Conduct desktop exercise involving harassment and assault response scenarios at a CIMT and Sub CIMT level every 2 years	Manager University Resilience	Q4 2021
3.5	Identify front line staff and students' representatives likely to receive disclosures	Review disclosure and reporting data to identify changes in staff groups receiving disclosures and adapt training rollout as necessary. Also see 2.1 above.	Dir AW&E/Dir PCO	Ongoing
3.6	Train frontline staff and student representatives	Continue implementation and awareness raising of the Sexual Harm policy and how to disclose/support disclosure of a Sexual Harm incident. Also see 2.1 above	Dir AW&E/Dir PCO	Commenced 2020 Ongoing
3.7	Clear response and reporting procedures relating to sexual harassment and sexual assault.	Review effectiveness of disclosure/reporting processes and update as required. To be captured in governance reporting process. See also 3.3 & 3.4 above	Dir AW&E/Dir PCO	Q1 2022
3.8	Improved environmental safety on campus	Review of on-campus security incidents and related campus security including cameras and lighting on campus.	Dir PDCSO	Ongoing

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation				
Recommendations	Actions 2021-2023	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date	
4.1	Collect and store confidentially individual disclosures	Internal review of confidential disclosure system (use and functionality) to be undertaken at 12 months post implementation and annually thereafter	Dir. Audit & Risk/Dir AW&E	Q1 2022
		Disclosures stored and managed through appropriately trained health staff in Access, Wellbeing & Equity.	Dir AW&E	Ongoing
4.2	Vice Chancellor to receive de-identified reports on data	Reporting of data and actions to Vice Chancellor's Advisory group and other governance committees covered in Sexual Harm Policy	Vice Chancellor/University Secretary	Ongoing Q2 & Q4
4.3	Audit of counselling services in relation to time to respond, training, wait times, number of requests	Counselling Service review accessibility and service use. Monitored and reviewed on a semester by semester basis. Annual reporting to Student Wellbeing Committee	Dir AW&E	Ongoing
4.4	Determine whether additional counselling services and resources are required and action			Ongoing
4.5	National University Student Survey by independent body every 3 years	Task and Finish Group to be convened to implement Universities Australia's follow up survey during Q3 2021	Dir AW&E	Q3 2021
		Vice Chancellor's RNA Advisory Group to review and implement recommendations arising from UA Survey	Vice Chancellor	Q1/2 2022

## Residential Colleges and University Residences

Residential Colleges and University Residences				
Recommendations	Actions 2021-2023	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date	
5.1	University residences should commission an independent, expert-led review of the factors which contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings.	Ongoing review of collaboration between CLV and Access, Wellbeing & Equity to support ongoing awareness raising of sexual harm.	Dir AW&E	Ongoing
		CLV to be invited to present annually to the VC Advisory Group in relation to activities to reduce and prevent incidents of Sexual Harm	Vice Chancellor	Q4 2021