

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS FACT SHEET



WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

Actions taken by Western Sydney University since the release of the *Change the Course* report by the Australian Human Rights Commission in August 2017¹

1. Respectful Relationships (Respect.Now.Always) Taskforce

→ Led by the Vice-Chancellor, the Respectful Relationships Taskforce (formerly known as the Respect. Now. Always. Taskforce) was established in December 2017, meeting on a quarterly basis with 13 meetings held as at July 2021. Representation on the Taskforce includes the Board of Trustees, a broad cross section of our student and staff community, including from the Counselling and Disability Service as well as external representation including three sexual assault services. The Taskforce oversees a whole-of-university response to the 9 recommendations of the AHRC Report (and also encompassing the 10 UA and 19 CAPA recommendations) to promote respectful relationships and improved campus culture. westernsydney.edu.au/respectful-relationships/respectnowalways/westerns_respect_now_always_campaign

2. Respect.Now. Always Project

→ A Respect. Now. Always. Project team established in June 2017 with a dedicated Project Officer and Project Support Assistant.

→ **External relationships** established with Western Sydney University Villages, health services, sexual assault services, police and other universities undertaking similar projects.

→ Major initiatives:

→ Establishment of a Respect. Now. Always. **Student Ambassador program**. westernsydney.edu.au/respectful-relationships/respectnowalways/wsu_respect_now_always_student_ambassador_program

→ Activation of a **Sexual Offences Reporting Portal** to enable all students to report issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment at any time. <https://offencereport.westernsydney.edu.au/>

→ Development of **Sexual Offences Response Policy and Procedures** which involved wide internal and external stakeholder input, including input from the Gendered Violence Research Network (GVRN) and specialist local sexual assault agencies.

→ An **independent review of all of the University's existing policies, procedures and protocols** in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment by GVRN.

→ Independent **audit of the University's Student Counselling Services** completed by Macquarie University.

→ Partnering with Western Sydney University Villages on a gender inclusive housing program.

→ Reviewed the University's Gender Equity Strategy and Action Plan in May 2021 in conjunction with the Equity and Diversity, against the Educating for Equality prevention framework.

→ Cross-campus **online and face-to-face communications** program enacted including digital signage, student paper editorials, brochures, social media, and presence at student-facing events across all campuses.

- Translation (into seven community languages) of materials aimed at international students.

- Student-developed poster series and safety cards aimed at changing the behaviour of social media perpetrators of sexual harassment.

- Pop-up stalls at each campus during Open days and campus orientations, expos, fairs and International Student Safety Sessions, Me Too Early Career Researchers event and Gender Unlimited events.

- Adapting bystander campaigns - *Take Action* (VicHealth) and OurWatch's *Doing Nothing Does Harm/Do Something* campaigns.

- *Respect at Western* campaign (funded by the Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equality Fund) using social media, video and online magazine.

→ **Education initiatives** including networking, training and resource-sharing eg. training all O-Week student assistants in Bystander Intervention and responding to disclosures and training for Higher Degree Research students/post graduate supervisors in conjunction with the Australian Council of Graduate Research. Specific examples include:

- A First Responder Network established with representation from the majority of Schools. A First Responder training module developed in collaboration with the Sexualities and Genders Research Network. westernsydney.edu.au/respectful-relationships/respectnowalways/first_responder_network

- Integrated prevention teaching and learning collaborations embedded in the Schools of Medicine, Law, Health Science, Public Health, Business, Social Sciences, Humanities and Communication Arts and the Graduate Research School. Specific courses / units include Bachelor of Occupational Therapy, Bachelor of Criminology, Medicine in Context and Social Design.

- Educational collaborations supporting student leaders and key staff at all campuses and entities including The College, International College, English Language Programs and Sydney Institute of Business and Technology.

- Implementation of the OurWatch Upskilling Preservices Professional pilot in partnership with School Deans, DAPs, Unit Coordinators and the Office of Equity and Diversity, for the School of Health Sciences/Occupational Therapy and School of Social Sciences/Criminology.

- Participation in the whole of institution *Educating for Equality* pilot.

- Counsellors within the University's Counselling Service trained in best-practice trauma-informed care by the Full Stop Foundation (NSW RDVSA) and by the Gendered Violence Research Network (GVRN).

3. Student engagement

Activities in which student involvement has been key:

→ Student Ambassador program.

→ Taskforce representation.

→ Employment within the RNA Project.

→ Student-developed poster series and safety cards.

→ Introductory video for the Sexual Offences Reporting Portal solely featuring students with accessibility features including captioning and Auslan translation.

→ Financial support of students to attend relevant external events.

¹ For more comprehensive information, please refer to the Change the Course - recommendations implementation table, June 2021 on the RNA webpage