

# SAFE CAMPUSES

October 2021



# Introduction

In August 2017, through *“Change the Course: Report into Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault at Australian Universities”*, the Australian Human Rights Commission released nine recommendations to assist Universities to enhance both the prevention of and response to, sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH) in University settings. Griffith University committed to implementing the recommendations in full and under the guidance of the Safe Campuses taskforce.

In 2017, Griffith University committed to adopting the Change the Course report recommendations in full and established the Safe Campuses initiative to oversee this work. A summary of the recommendations and Griffith’s actions and progress towards each is outlined in this report.

The National Student Safety Survey, a follow up to the Human Right’s Commission survey is being conducted in September 2021 by Universities Australia in partnership with the Social Research Centre and leading expert on violence prevention Dr Anastasia Powell. Survey results are anticipated in early 2022 and will help to inform future Safe Campuses work at Griffith University.

## Change the Course recommendations

### 1. Leadership & Governance

The University continues to respond to the Change the Course recommendations, and support Universities Australia’s Respect. Now. Always. Campaign. This work is overseen Professor Liz Burd, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education) and Chair of the Safe Campuses Advisory Group, and reported regularly to the Vice Chancellor. A formal report is prepared annually for University Council which outlines annual activities together with incident, reporting and support data.

### 2. Changing Attitudes and Behaviours

Ongoing efforts to change attitudes towards violence, and promote positive, respectful behaviours are coordinated in collaboration between the Safe Campuses, Health, Counselling and Wellbeing and the MATE Bystander teams.

Key activities in 2020-2021 include:

- Virtual *It’s On All Of Us* week in May 2021 – resource sharing, virtual and face to face workshops and events
- MATE Bystander community training and webinars
- A new Respectful Relationships group program for female identifying students – the program encourages participants to identify healthy vs unhealthy relationships; learn personal boundaries and how to voice them; and find better ways to communicate with people and manage conflict.
- Continued delivery of e-Learning programs to students and staff:
  - Recognise. Respond. Refer. – online and face to face delivery – a bespoke ‘responding to disclosures of personal violence’ program for Griffith [students](#) and [staff](#) that encourages members of our university community to
    - ✓ recognise the signs of violence and disrespectful behaviour;
    - ✓ respond with empathy and compassion; and
    - ✓ refer to support and reporting services at or external to the University.
  - [Sex & Respect: It’s On All Of Us](#) – a respectful relationships and consent module from the MATE Bystander team, encouraging participants to see respect as the foundation of healthy relationships

and also covering consent in relationships and sexual interactions; attitudes and assumptions; and bystander interventions.

- [MATE Bystander Program online](#) – personal leadership; gender inequality and gender based violence; sex and respect; and being the change through positive bystander actions. In the 12 months from September 2020 to August 2021, 1,089 members of the Griffith community have completed at least one module in the program.
- Continued review and improvement of tip sheets and other online resources including the [Safe Campuses](#) website; [Sex. Love. Dating.](#) respectful relationships booklet; [Responding Effectively to Disclosures](#) tip sheet; [Managers Guide: Supporting staff to support our students](#); and [Violence in LGBTIQ+ Relationships](#).
- Collaboration between Safe Campuses, the Student Representative Council and Gold Coast Student Guild to sponsor and host a series of self defence workshops across the 2021 calendar year to enhance confidence and sense of personal safety. Over 160 students and staff have registered to participate in the workshops.

### 3. Awareness of support services and reporting avenues

Griffith understands the importance of supporting students and staff who have experienced violence to choose their own path for healing and resolution and provides a range of services and options for students and staff.

- Counsellor Violence Response & Prevention – increased to 1.6 FTE from May 2021 to ensure students can continue to access priority appointments from this specialist role in an environment when violence has been exacerbated by Covid-19 social restrictions, and where public disclosures have increased, prompting individuals to be triggered and/or to also disclose and seek support.
- SASH Responder Network – a network of staff from academic and student-facing administrative areas who are trained to be a local contact to receive disclosures with empathy, compassion and knowledge of the support and reporting options available.

### 4. Commission an independent, expert-led review of existing university policies and response pathways

An independent, expert-led review of policies and response pathways was conducted in 2018.

A significant review of the University's sexual assault, sexual harassment, bullying, harassment, discrimination and conduct policies and response pathways has continued in 2021, under the leadership of Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education), Professor Liz Burd. A new suite of policies and improved reporting and response processes are anticipated by early 2022.

### 5. Responding to disclosures

The [SASH Responder network](#) was implemented in May 2020. The network includes only staff who have attended the Recognise. Respond. Refer. for SASH Responders workshop which explores the drivers of violence and gender-inequality; types of interpersonal violence; concepts such as power and control, power imbalance and coercion; signs of violence and trauma; responding with empathy and compassion; and the support and reporting options available both at the University and externally.

The Recognise. Respond. Refer. module is available to [staff](#) and [students](#) as an accessible alternative to face to face/virtual workshop delivery. The module provides general information on the themes outlined above, together with practice scenarios in a University setting. In the 12 months from September 2020 to August 2021, 175 students and

430 staff have completed the module. Face to face workshops (or virtual equivalent) have also been provided for student leaders including Club Executives, Brisbane Residential Advisers and Wellness Warriors.

## 6. Monitoring & Evaluation: collection, storage and use of information

In September 2019, the University implemented a bespoke case management system which enables automated workflows and secure collection and reporting of systemic data through the online Report a Concern form. The form has provisions for formal, informal, identified and anonymous reports.

Reporting, disclosure and support data is consolidated annually. See below, [Reporting, disclosure and reporting data](#) for further details.

## 7. Audit of Counselling Services

An external audit of the University's student counselling services was undertaken in late 2017- early 2018. A range of enhancements to Counselling and Wellbeing Services were made including the continuation of priority appointments through the Counsellor, Violence Response and Prevention and extension of the University crisis line to a 24/7 Wellbeing Support Line, offering round-the-clock access to immediate and crisis support for Griffith students. The services is operated for the University by LifeLine and provides referral back to University counsellors where requested.

## 8. Follow-up sector-wide survey

The National Student Safety Survey is being run from 6 September to 3 October 2021. Griffith University is participating in full, including the residential accommodation module. The University is promoting the survey and associated 'Share Your Story' qualitative research activity to students via on-campus signage, social media and email communications. Survey results are anticipated in early 2022.

## 9. Residential colleges and university residences should commission an independent, expert-led review of the factors which contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings.

An independent, expert-led review of University residences was completed in 2018, concurrent to the Recommendation 4 review of policies and response pathways. An internal review of accommodation services was also conducted in 2019. A number of enhancements have been progressed including dedicated Health, Counselling and Wellbeing services to support residential colleges; focus on early identification of problematic relationships and behaviours including mental health concerns; inclusion of key accommodation staff as members of the SASH Responder network and ongoing training and awareness activities for residential staff and leaders including responding to disclosures and LGBTI+ inclusion.

# Reporting, disclosure and support data

## Reporting and disclosure

Incidents and concerns are reported via a range of students, staff and services across the University. The University acknowledges that not all victim-survivors wish for their report or disclosure to be captured by the University, however it is working to encourage staff and students to report all incidents and concerns, anonymously if they wish.

A snapshot of incidents and concerns captured by the Campus Support Team and Report a Concern form is as follows, with further details outlined below.

Reporting Channel	Period 01.09.17-31.08.18	Period 01.09.18 - 31.08.19	Period 01.09.19 - 31.08.20	Period 01.09.20 - 31.08.21	Notes
Report a Concern	9 SASH disclosures (4 x SA, 5 x SH)	28 SASH disclosures (4 x SA, 24 x SH)	15 SASH disclosures (3 x SA, 12 x SH)	19 SASH disclosures (6 x SA, 13 x SH)	A majority of concerns related to bullying, (non-sexual) harassment and discrimination. Where a location was provided, it was reported that SASH incidents occurred online (4), off campus (4) and on-campus (8). These trends are consistent with the previous reporting period.
Campus Support (Security)	1 sexual assault	1 sexual assault	0 sexual assault	1 sexual assault	Total reports to Campus Care increased across the reporting period, presumably due to increased on-campus activities following the national covid-19 lockdown. Incidents of abhorrent behaviour nearly doubled (59) compared with the previous reporting period.

### Report a Concern

A total of 93 related submissions were received via Report a Concern, which is consistent with the previous reporting period (96). Half of all related reports concern bullying, harassment and discrimination (n=46 or 49.5%), this continues a trend from previous years of these behaviours reflecting a majority of reports. For this reporting period, 6 reports related to sexual assault and 13 related to sexual harassment. Incidents were reported incidents are occurring online, on and off-campus.

Also consistent with previous reports, data indicates that students are choosing to report the range of reportable behaviours both formally (58%) and informally (38%), with a further 4% of complaints unclassified.

### Campus Support (Security)

During the reporting period, a total of 758 incidents were reported via the Campus Support team. Incidents range from behavioural concerns to damage, first aid, security or fire alarm activation, theft and vehicle incidents. During the reporting period, 1 incident related to sexual assault, 6 to verbal assault, 3 to physical assault/stalking and 59 to aberrant behaviour.

## Support

Students can access support from the University via Counselling and Wellbeing and the University Crisis Line. A snapshot is provided below:

Support Channel	Period 1.9.17-31.8.18	Period 1.9.18 - 31.8.19	Period 1.9.19 - 31.8.20	Period 1.9.20 - 31.8.21	Notes
Counselling and Wellbeing - Personal Violence	212 unique clients	194 unique clients	194 unique clients	235 unique clients	A majority of contacts continue to be from female students, with most incidents not reported to police. Sexual assault, rape and domestic violence were the leading types of violence disclosed.



Mental Wellbeing Support Line (LifeLine)	126 unique contacts	377 unique contacts	453 unique contacts	676 Unique contacts	The Mental Wellbeing Support line has been operated for the University by LifeLine since October 2017. Initially operating as the after-hours University Crisis Line service, it was extended to a 24/7 service from February 2020. Contacts to the service have significantly increased in this time.
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## Counselling and Wellbeing

Health, Counselling and Wellbeing provides support to students through Counselling and Wellbeing, Health and Medical and Pastoral Care services, or a combination of these. Personal violence data for the reporting period indicates:

Measure	Period	Period	Period	Period
	1.9.17-31.8.18	1.9.18 - 31.8.19	1.9.19 - 31.8.20	1.9.20 - 31.8.21
# Unique clients referencing personal violence	212	194	226	235
# incidents of personal violence referenced	272	249	190	184
# clients reporting more than one type of violence	46	90	8	10
% disclosures from female students	92.5	89.6	84	81.3
% disclosures made by International students	17.3	15.4	29	22.6
% incidents reported to police	29.1	20.8	27	26.4
% violence type = sexual assault, rape or domestic violence	73.9	80.3	90	60
% violence type = childhood sexual abuse	17.6	12.1	8	9.4
% violence type = sexual harassment	8.5	7.6	6	8.9
% timing of incident = within past month	29.2	46.1	42	18.3
% timing of incident = one to twelve months	25.2	20.3	37	7.7
% timing of incident = over one year ago	45.6	33.6	38	33.2
% timing of incident = not disclosed	24	18.9	8	-

## Mental Wellbeing Support Line

The Mental Wellbeing Support Line (previously University Crisis Line) offers a 24/7 immediate and crisis support service for students, with referral back to the University or other support services as requested by the student. During the reporting period, Griffith students have sought support from the Support Line on 676 occasions. Reporting data for the period 1.9.20 to 31.8.21 indicates that 143 contacts related to family and relationship concerns and 49 to abuse and trauma, while 2 students sought advice specifically for sexual assault.