

#IDeserveSafety

**Sexual Violence and Institutional Betrayal in
Australian University Residential Halls and
Student Accommodation**

**The STOP Campaign's submission to the Australian
Universities Accord Panel**

10 September 2023



This is The STOP Campaign's *final submission* to the Australian Universities Accord Panel (Accord Panel). The STOP Campaign has provided this submission by email to the Chair of the Accord Panel, Professor Mary O'Kane, on Sunday 10 September 2023. This submission follows our placeholder submission submitted on Friday 1 September 2023. This two-part submission has been permitted by the office of the Minister for Education, the Hon Jason Clare MP. This submission is suitable to be published publicly.

Acknowledgement of Country

The STOP Campaign acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and Owners of Country throughout Australia and their connection to land, sea and community. This submission was developed on the lands of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples who are the Traditional Custodians of the ACT region. We respectfully acknowledge the wisdom, guidance and openness of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples who have contributed to our work and we pay our respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded and that Australia always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

We also recognise the disproportionate impacts of violence on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as a result of colonisation. We strive towards dismantling these harmful structures.

Dedication to victims and survivors

The STOP Campaign acknowledges the lived experiences of all those involved in the #IDeserveSafety campaign and expresses gratitude to the activists and advocates whose shoulders we stand on. We dedicate this submission to all victims and survivors of sexual violence, including those who are no longer with us.

Please know that you are never alone.

To victims and survivors, we see you, we hear you and we believe you.

CONTENT WARNING: mentions of institutional betrayal, sexual violence and suicide.

This submission addresses experiences of violence and harm on university campuses, particularly within residential halls and student accommodation. The content mentions institutional betrayal, sexual assault, sexual harassment and suicide. These topics may be distressing and re-traumatising. Readers are urged to engage at their own comfort level and to prioritise their wellbeing. If needed, seek support from a trusted person or through a professional service. Additional assistance is available through the support services below.

Support Services

Support is available 24/7 at:

- 1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732
- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- 13YARN: 13 92 76

More national resources for support can be found at:

<https://www.saferesponsetoolkit.com.au/national-support-services>

More specific sexual violence support services in each jurisdiction can be found at:

<https://www.nasasv.org.au/support-directory>

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About The STOP Campaign

This submission was produced by The STOP Campaign, a grassroots organisation of university students and alumni who are passionate about ending sexual violence in Australian universities. By gathering the lived experiences of our members and the broader community, The STOP Campaign has identified that sexual violence continues to be an unacceptable risk to students in residential hall communities.

The STOP Campaign's vision is that Australian tertiary learning communities are free from sexual violence and stigmatisation. Our mission is to empower young people to create and sustain positive sociocultural change in Australian tertiary learning communities through activism, awareness, empowerment and education. We are a volunteer-run feminist organisation that values intersectionality, integrity, respect and passion.

Since our inception in 2018, The STOP Campaign has successfully implemented a number of projects. These include:

- The creation of educational materials and resources on topics including safe sex, consent, sexual and family violence, sex positivity, and access to medical, legal and personal support.
- Facilitating peer-led education and advocacy workshops with tertiary students in residential halls to prevent sexual violence and promote sexual wellbeing.
- Facilitating programs for young people (particularly victim-survivors of sexual violence) focused on empowerment, confidence and building connections.
- Building a platform for victim-survivors in Australia to publicly share their experiences and journeys towards healing.

The authors of this submission are currently studying at Australian universities or have recently graduated and have either lived or currently live in residential halls.

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Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/thestopcampaign>

Social media: [@thestopcampaignaus](https://twitter.com/thestopcampaignaus)

Executive Summary

Universities, residential halls and student accommodation providers in Australia fail to provide safe learning environments for students. Sexual violence impacts everyone in universities and is perpetrated across all levels of these institutions. This submission provides first-hand experiences of violence and harm in Australian universities, with particular focus on residential halls and student accommodation, and outlines recommendations for change.

The Australian Universities Accord Interim Report (the Interim Report) inadequately addressed violence and harm occurring within universities and did not include or consider harm occurring in the context of residential halls and student accommodation. The Interim Report also failed to adequately address the broader consequences for students who experience sexual violence in the university context. This includes the impacts on education outcomes and qualification attainment - a core aspect of the Australian Universities Accord Process. Moreover, the Interim Report did not address student death, self-harm or suicide. This is despite the alarming rates of suicide in residential halls and student accommodation in Australia, as identified by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.¹

The STOP Campaign is deeply concerned about the lack of attention given to the harm that occurs within university residential communities in the Interim Report. This is because the most recent National Student Safety Survey (NSSS) found that approximately 275 students are sexually assaulted in an Australian university context each week and that student accommodation and on-campus residences are among the most common locations of sexual assault (accounting for 25.3% of assault locations).² It is also important to note that this data was collected at a time where COVID-19 restrictions limited the number of students living on

¹Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2023, 11 July). *Deaths in Australia*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/life-expectancy-deaths/deaths-in-australia/contents/leading-causes-of-death>

²Heywood, W., Myers, P., Powell, A., Meikle, G., & Nguyen, D. (2022). *National Student Safety Survey: Report on the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault among university students in 2021*. The Social Research Centre. <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2021-NSSS-National-Report.pdf>

campus.³ Coupled with the fact that sexual violence is significantly underreported, we expect these figures are much greater in reality.

The STOP Campaign created the [#IDeserveSafety Survey](#) (the Survey) to collect the experiences of violence and harm in university residential halls and student accommodation settings to inform this submission. Through the Survey, students, staff and alumni from universities across Australia were invited to share their experiences, the impact of those experiences and any recommendations they had for the Accord Panel. Responses highlighted several common themes regarding victim-survivor experiences, the responses by universities and residences and the impacts of their experiences.

The Survey responses illuminated the prevalence of institutional betrayal and the inadequacy of university responses to sexual violence and harm. The findings reveal that victim-survivors were failed by universities, with almost half of respondents detailing their experience of being dismissed or met with insensitive responses when disclosing to their university and/or residence. Furthermore, half of the respondents discussed how perpetrators were not held accountable and in some instances, were given positions of leadership and power. The responses also demonstrated how LGBTQIA+ students and international students were disregarded and blamed for their experiences. Victim-survivors must be supported by their university rather than being treated as though they are the problem.

Respondents outlined the lasting and detrimental impacts of their experiences. Half of respondents explained that they now live with mental health impacts, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, suicide attempts, disordered eating and panic attacks as a result of their experiences. A third of respondents specified that negative academic performance was a direct result of the harm they endured. Furthermore, a significant portion expressed fear of running into perpetrators on campus, with some being forced to continue living in the same accommodation with their perpetrator. To effectively understand and respond to violence and harm in universities, a deeper understanding of the multifaceted impacts of trauma and a comprehensive approach to prevention is essential.

³Hurley, P. (2020, November 10). *COVID to halve international student numbers in Australia by mid 2021-it's not just unis that will feel their loss*. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/covid-to-halve-international-student-numbers-in-australia-by-mid-2021-its-not-just-unis-that-will-feel-their-loss-148997>. Note that this does not account for the number of domestic students who were unable to live in on-campus student accommodation due to COVID-related restrictions.

By drawing on the lived experience of individuals directly affected by violence, harm and institutional betrayal in university settings, we pose several recommendations to the Accord Panel. These recommendations urge a transformation of university environments and are rooted in the lived experiences of victim-survivors who understand the complexities and nuances of these settings. Our 25 recommendations collectively emphasise the importance of a holistic approach to addressing this issue, incorporating education, training, support, transparency and cultural change to create safer and more inclusive environments for everyone. We call on the Accord Panel to acknowledge and address these crucial gaps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of university communities, inclusive of residential halls and student accommodation.

The STOP Campaign firmly believes that a collective effort to prevent violence on campus will pave the way for safer and more inclusive learning environments. In his speech to the House of Representatives on 3 August 2023, Minister for Education the Hon Jason Clare MP urged for The STOP Campaign to be consulted as part of this collective effort.⁴ On 9 August 2023, he further reiterated his commitment to address the issue of sexual violence in universities:

“I have met with the remarkable young women from The STOP Campaign and from End Rape on Campus and listened to their stories ... of a confused and inadequate response process within our universities, of inconsistent complaint processes, a lack of materials on the right to complain, a lack of education campaigns on consent and a lack of feedback when a complaint has been made ... We have to act.”⁵

We welcome Minister Clare’s acknowledgement of the failures of university institutions to act and his commitment to amplifying the voices of victims, survivors, students and activists. The STOP Campaign is committed to working collaboratively with the Australian Universities Accord Panel and the Australian Government to address these issues and foster meaningful change on university campuses.

⁴Clare, J. (2023, August 3). *Higher Education Support Amendment (Response to the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report) Bill 2023*. Jason Clare MP.
<https://www.jasonclare.com.au/media/speeches/5575-higher-education-support-amendment-response-to-the-australian-universities-accord-interim-report-bill-2023-thursday-3-august-2023ust-2023>

⁵ Clare, J. (2023, August 9). *Ministerial Statements: Universities - Physical and Sexual Harassment and Violence*. Jason Clare MP.
<https://www.jasonclare.com.au/media/speeches/5596-ministerial-statements-universities-physical-and-sexual-harassment-and-violence>

Overview of Recommendations

First and foremost, believe victim-survivors and treat them with basic human decency and respect.

- Anonymous respondent #48

Below is a list of our recommendations for the Australian Universities Accord Panel and Australian Government to consider, as well as State and Territory Governments, Universities and Tertiary Education Institutions, and Residential Halls and Student Accommodation Providers.

These recommendations are drawn from existing evidence, the #IDeserveSafety Survey, and our own personal lived experience and expertise. On page 74, we have a more detailed discussion of our recommendations.

Recommendations for the Australian Universities Accord Panel

1. **Adopt this submission's recommendations** and include them in the Final Report of the Accord Process.
2. Recommend that residential halls and student accommodation, including private entities, be a **priority area for inquiry and reform** for the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments.
3. Develop and utilise an **intersectional policy framework** to guide the Accord Process and its outcomes.
4. Establish an **expert and victim-survivor-led advisory group** to guide the implementation of reforms stemming from the Accord Panel's Final Report.

Recommendations for the Australian Commonwealth Government

5. Establish a **national independent inquiry** into harm and violence occurring in university residential halls and student accommodation.
6. Establish a **national independent body** to provide oversight and monitoring of the operation of universities and residential halls and student accommodation in relation to student welfare, inclusive of sexual violence and harm.

Recommendations for State and Territory Governments

7. Ensure tertiary education institutions have **access to and disseminate information about local support services and relevant legal and policy frameworks** related to sexual violence and harm (for both domestic and international students).
8. Where appropriate, work with the Commonwealth Government to **impose sanctions** on tertiary education institutions and/or student accommodation providers that fail to meet the national standards and ensure that tertiary education institutions establish **appropriate accountability mechanisms for residential halls and student accommodation.**

Recommendations for Universities and Tertiary Education Institutions

9. Develop, publish and communicate **clear and accessible processes for disclosing and reporting sexual violence** in tertiary education settings.
10. **Ensure that reporting processes** are survivor-centred, trauma-informed and align with the national standards set by the independent body.
11. Develop and enforce **accountability mechanisms for staff who perpetrate** acts of sexual violence, including immediate suspension where appropriate.
12. Ensure that all prevention and response policies are developed through **genuine consultation using co-design principles** with students, victim-survivors, advocates and subject-matter experts.
13. Provide a mechanism in which **feedback and/or complaints** related to university policy and procedures can be given by individuals and groups **without punishment, repercussion or restriction.**
14. Ensure **educational materials on sexual violence** are easily available in university public spaces, residential halls and online.
15. Provide **ongoing mandatory training** for all staff and student leaders on sexual violence prevention and response.
16. Integrate **information about sexual violence prevention and response** into the university curriculum, including information on activism and advocacy opportunities available to students to support prevention efforts on campus.
17. Increase **funding for university safety and wellbeing support** services.
18. Release annual reports on sexual violence prevalence, prevention and response efforts to **ensure transparency and accountability.**

19. Provide **alternative academic pathways for victim-survivors**, which may include allowances in their academic schedules and conditions to allow them to appropriately cope with their trauma whilst not compromising their tertiary education experience.
20. **Remunerate and appropriately credit grassroots organisations** where their expertise and resources are referred to in developing processes, policies and/or educational materials for sexual violence prevention and response.

Recommendations for Residential Halls and Student Accommodation Providers

21. Develop, publish and communicate **clear and accessible processes for disclosing and reporting sexual violence** to the student accommodation provider.
22. Develop and communicate **complaints procedures** for residents of halls and student accommodation **on staff behaviour** and responses to disclosures of student harm.
23. Provide **ongoing training for all residents** living in a residential hall or student accommodation setting on sexual violence prevention and response.
24. Establish clear co-operative **policies for engaging with external agencies**, including the police, in cases of sexual violence.
25. Increase the **security of residential halls and student accommodation** buildings to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and to prevent instances of theft, stalking and other criminal behaviours by non-residents.

We fully support End Rape On Campus Australia and Fair Agenda's submission and their recommendations to the Accord Panel. We support their calls for a national independent oversight mechanism to hold universities and student residences accountable for their inaction on sexual violence. Self-governance has not worked and this is a necessary step to safeguard future students from violence and harm by their respective institutions.

The Problem: Sexual Violence in Australian Universities

Sexual Violence

In 2021, Universities Australia released the results of the NSSS, which outlines the prevalence and nature of sexual violence at 39 Australian universities.⁶ Of the 40,000+ Australian university students surveyed in the NSSS, 1 in 20 had been sexually assaulted and 1 in 6 had been sexually harassed since starting university. Some other key findings from the NSSS include:

- 1 in 3 university students in Australia have experienced sexual assault in their lifetime.
- The highest rate of sexual assault in the university context was reported by students who identify as women (41.8%), transgender (42.9%) and non-binary or non-identifying (56.1%).
- 51% of sexual assaults experienced by university students in 2021 occurred in student accommodation, university clubs, societies, events and/or spaces.
- Only 5.6% of students who were sexually assaulted made a formal report to their university. Fewer than 1 in 3 of these students who came forward were satisfied with the process.

We note also that, due to the decreased number of students living on campus during the data collection period in 2020-2021 (due to COVID-19), the ongoing rates of sexual violence on campus is likely to be much higher than the NSSS suggests.

The high rates of sexual violence found by the NSSS make clear that the issue has not improved since 2017 when the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) published the *Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities* (Change the Course report).⁷ Some key findings from the Change the Course report included:

- Across 2015 and 2016, 1 in 10 women university students were raped or sexually assaulted.

⁶Heywood, W., Myers, P., Powell, A., Meikle, G., & Nguyen, D. (2022). *National Student Safety Survey: Report on the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault among university students in 2021*. The Social Research Centre.

<https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2021-NSSS-National-Report.pdf>

⁷Australian Human Rights Commission. (2017). *Change the course: National report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities*.

https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/AHRC_2017_ChangeTheCourse_Univ_ersityReport.pdf

- Approximately 200 sexual assaults occurred within a university setting each week around Australia, or an average of 30 sexual assaults per day.
- Approximately 68 students living in university accommodation will be raped or sexually assaulted in a university setting each week across Australia.

The NSSS also discussed students' awareness of reporting and support services available on campuses. 50% of students surveyed did not know how to make a report of sexual violence, and an even more disheartening 74.5% of those who experienced sexual assault on campus did not seek help from their universities.

Ultimately, these statistics demonstrate that instances of sexual violence are highly prevalent in Australian tertiary learning communities. These findings present a clear issue with the way that sexual violence is currently addressed, and highlight the need for reform of current practices and policies.

Institutional Betrayal

Many victim-survivors of sexual violence not only have to experience trauma, but are also forced to re-live this trauma through unsafe reporting mechanisms and are blamed for their experiences by university staff. In this way, victim-survivors are betrayed by the institutions and structures that are meant to safeguard and protect them. This is called **institutional betrayal**. Institutional betrayal is the harm that an institution inflicts on people who depend upon it. Individuals who expect and trust an institution to keep them safe may feel betrayed if the institution instead fails to prevent violence, creates difficult or unsafe processes for reporting, supports cover-ups, endorses misinformation or punishes victim-survivors who disclose their experiences.

Institutional betrayal includes instances where institutions, such as universities and residential halls, fail to acknowledge the diverse experiences of victim-survivors and respond appropriately to their reports. The systems put in place by tertiary learning institutions, particularly residential halls, are designed to protect student wellbeing, including by fostering safe residential communities on university campuses. When victim-survivors are continually disbelieved, blamed or stigmatised while disclosing or reporting their experiences, it is clear that current institutional systems are failing to uphold commitments to student safety.

Institutional betrayal can cause further harm in addition to the trauma that victim-survivors experience. The immense psychological pressure can prevent victim-survivors from speaking freely or from providing a full and accurate account of their experience. The STOP Campaign aims to hold institutions accountable by providing victim-survivors and their supporters with information and knowledge about their available options following sexual violence that these institutions provide. We have engaged directly with these institutions to provide accurate information about the reality of the services they provide.

Whilst residential spaces at universities are necessary and important, they are also communities where sexual violence and hazing have thrived since their beginning. Recent years have brought an increase in awareness of these issues as more students, young people, allies, victim-survivors and community members are standing up to the injustice that is occurring. While we appreciate that some progress has been made by universities to address the problem, these efforts are insufficient to address the harms inflicted upon victim-survivors in residential hall settings. University is supposed to be an exciting time for young people to learn and build positive social connections in their community. It is unacceptable that young students in Australia can also expect to be sexually assaulted or harassed as part of this experience.

This is why The STOP Campaign exists. There is a problem with the ways in which sexual violence is addressed in Australian tertiary learning communities - and who better to contribute to the solution than the victim-survivors and young people themselves.

The STOP Campaign: Our Experiences

The STOP Campaign provides an avenue for young people to feel empowered to address, prevent and respond to sexual violence in their communities in a trauma-informed and safe manner. We also lead initiatives that help victim-survivors feel empowered to speak their truth and advocate for change.

Through our own lived experience as students, including experiences of sexual violence and/or supporting someone who has experienced violence themselves at university, we know how institutions fail students in their prevention and response efforts. This is largely due to their failure to engage and consult with students with lived experience in a safe, trauma-informed and intersectional way. Universities have a responsibility to protect the safety and wellbeing of students. As such, it is critical that the experiences of students are at the centre of universities' efforts to improve their sexual violence prevention and response practices. We also know that grassroots and peer-led advocacy is an excellent tool to engage and empower young people and students to build and sustain their own safe and inclusive communities that are free from violence.



For years, victims, survivors and advocates have called for bodies like the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and Universities Australia to respond to the issue of sexual violence occurring in Australian universities. These calls have largely been ignored. The lived experiences of our members and the broader community suggests that the messaging by TEQSA and Universities Australia does not reflect or address the harms that are occurring in residential halls. Furthermore, it does not reflect the subsequent betrayal by residential halls and universities when people try to speak about their experiences and/or to seek help.

Victim-survivors of sexual violence have been neglected for too long. The STOP Campaign rejects societal norms that discourage students and young advocates from demanding institutions to protect them from violence and harm. We want decision-makers and people in positions of power to listen to us, consult meaningfully with students and activists, elevate the voices of victim-survivors in their work, and co-design solutions in partnership with their campus communities. The unfortunate reality is that individuals who advocate within the sexual violence space rarely reach influential positions, and institutions use their power to silence those who speak out.

The STOP Campaign was founded by Camille Schloeffel, who at the time was a student and resident at the ANU. The STOP Campaign was founded in direct response to the failures of the ANU to adequately prevent or respond to sexual violence. Since then, The STOP Campaign has led a range of initiatives, including, but not limited to:

1. Revealing Truths and Breaking Stigmas Zine and Video Series (on [Facebook](#) and [Youtube](#))
2. Reclaim the Narrative Zine and Video Series (on [Facebook](#) and [Youtube](#))
3. [Safe Response Toolkit](#)
4. [The College Program](#)

The STOP Campaign has had more than 120 members volunteer with us from more than 10 universities across Australia. Currently, our two main projects are the Safe Response Toolkit and the College Program.

The Safe Response Toolkit 	The College Program 
<p>The Safe Response Toolkit: A Toolkit for Sexual Violence Victim-Survivors and Their Supporters (SRT) is a physical and online resource that provides information to victim-survivors and their supporters about how to safely respond to sexual violence disclosures and access support services in the ACT. The SRT is available online and has been distributed in hardcopy across the community.</p> <p>The SRT covers topics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key concepts to understand sexual violence, sexual wellbeing and destigmatisation. 	<p>The College Program is a series of workshops for tertiary students who live on-campus in residential halls. The purpose of the program is to prevent sexual violence and promote sexual wellbeing in university communities. The College Program is underpinned by intersectionality, safety, destigmatisation, the importance of lived experience and peer facilitation to effectively engage students and build safer communities.</p> <p>Key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have safe and open discussions about sex and sexual violence, including the behaviours, institutional

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual violence and the law, including the criminal, civil and restorative justice processes. • Reporting sexual violence to police and reporting sexual violence that occurs in institutional settings. • Support services in the ACT and nationally, including those available in the immediate aftermath of sexual violence. • The process of sharing an experience of sexual violence publicly. • Sexual violence activism and advocacy. 	<p>structures and cultural norms that drive it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss skills and strategies to safely respond to sexual violence, promote ethical sexual relationships and engage in activism and advocacy in our communities. • Provide evidence-informed and trauma-informed educational resources on sexual violence, sexual wellbeing and relevant support services.
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The STOP Campaign itself has faced barriers in implementing our programs and distributing resources in university settings, and our members have been penalised for their involvement in activism. For example, we have seen instances of university institutions refusing to distribute the Safe Response Toolkit to their staff and students. In one scenario, a residential hall distributed copies around their community but were prevented from continuing until the university's internal services were displayed on the front cover - despite the benefit that these resources would provide to the community. One university ignored multiple requests to distribute the SRT within their residential halls and wider community, in what appeared to be an attempt to discourage students who experience sexual violence from seeking support from external services.

The STOP Campaign received government funding from the Department of Social Services under the previous *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*, to develop and deliver The College Program as a primary prevention activity to reduce violence against women. However, a lack of proactive support from senior executive staff and strenuous red tape requirements blocked this program from taking place at one university, despite several attempts by students to organise sessions with us. We have also been informed that members of staff and students have been threatened with losing their

positions or scholarships if they engage with us. As a result, this program has not yet been able to take place within the university environments it was designed for.

Victim-survivors of sexual violence, mostly on their personal, unpaid time, are the ones doing a lot of meaningful and evidence-informed changemaking in relation to violence prevention and response. Our members have supported many students who have been betrayed, threatened, abused, bullied and belittled by staff at universities. Further, many student leaders are bullied, silenced and intimidated by staff members in an attempt to prevent them from speaking out. Some of our members continue to advocate with us years after graduating, largely because they know that many current students who would otherwise like to be involved are still unable to meaningfully engage due to threats from their institutions.

In our experience, universities do not adequately engage and consult with students in relation to sexual violence prevention and response initiatives. Their approaches are not always relevant or localised to the current Australian university community context. Residential halls in particular have frequently blocked students (particularly student leaders) from being able to speak openly about what is happening in their halls. This is institutional silencing.

We are the experts of our own experiences and this must be acknowledged and respected.

Australian Universities Accord Process and Interim Report: Issues

Please listen to the voices of students and survivors as these are the opinions that matter. Policies made about universities only affect those that interact with the university - and thus our voices should be amplified.

- Anonymous respondent #4

1. Issues with the Interim Report

Limited Focus on Sexual Violence

The Interim Report, released in July 2023, fails to appropriately acknowledge the impact of sexual violence within university communities. Only one subsection of the 162-page report mentions sexual violence explicitly. Sexual violence pervades academic life, mental health and the social culture of students and their university communities. Given the prevalence and negative impacts of sexual violence within Australian tertiary learning communities, it is unacceptable that such little focus has been placed on addressing this issue.

The Interim Report briefly touches upon sexual violence, however scattered sentences and a solitary subsection do not capture the true scope of the problem in Australian universities. Subsection 3.2.3.2, *Addressing Harm*, mentions the impact of sexual violence on students in just one sentence - "elevated rates of post-traumatic stress disorder and clinically significant depression and anxiety, resulting in higher rates of nonattendance, delayed academic progression, and higher academic failure rates".⁸ The repercussions of sexual violence are far-reaching and encompass not only academic setbacks but also profound emotional, psychological and physical traumas that are lifelong. Subsection 3.2.3.2 does not acknowledge the depth of these repercussions.

Ultimately, the Interim Report fails to meaningfully engage with the grave and widespread issue of sexual violence within university communities. To effectively understand and respond to sexual violence and student harm on university campuses, a deeper understanding of the multifaceted impacts of sexual violence and a comprehensive approach to preventing and

⁸ Department of Education. (2023, July 19). *Australian Universities Accord interim report* (D23/2264421). <https://www.education.gov.au/australian-universities-accord/resources/accord-interim-report>

responding to harm is essential. We call on the Australian Universities Accord Panel to acknowledge and address these crucial gaps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone in university communities.

No Mention of Residential Halls or Student Accommodation

The Interim Report fails to recognise and acknowledge the role of student accommodation in Australia's higher education system, particularly in relation to violence and harm. There are more than 220 on-campus residential halls and approximately 140 other purpose-built student accommodation buildings available for students studying in Australia.⁹ These student accommodation buildings are operated by private entities such as Unilodge, Scape, Iglu and Yugo. While the exact number of residential halls and student accommodation buildings in Australia is unknown, based on these figures it is estimated that there are more than 360 across the country. This number is growing, especially with the increased privatisation of student accommodation. As such, it is essential that student accommodation be considered when discussing matters relating to the broader university experience.

Within the context of sexual violence in tertiary learning communities, residential halls are one of the major settings in which sexual violence is perpetrated. Distinct disparities exist between students who live in university-related accommodation compared to those who don't. For example, 16% of students living in on-campus accommodations experienced sexual assault in the past year, compared to 0.8% living off-campus during the same period.¹⁰ The problem of sexual violence within residential halls is exacerbated by the lack of consistent institutional transparency surrounding reporting mechanisms and policies. As a result, there is an absence of clear monitoring and evaluation processes to determine whether current practices are meaningfully contributing to student safety and wellbeing. By failing to address residential halls and student accommodation, particularly within the context of sexual violence and student safety, the Interim Report does not address all facets of the university experience. Without

⁹ Henry, A. (2023, April 11). *Review of Australia's higher education system: Discussion paper consultation*. https://www.education.gov.au/system/files/documents/submission-file/2023-04/AUA_tranche3_Allison%20Henry.pdf;

Newland, C., & Savitz, P. (2022, December 13). *Australian student accommodation 2022*. Savills. <https://pdf.savills.asia/asia-pacific-research/australian-research/australia-student-accommodation/australian-student-accommodation-2022.pdf>

¹⁰ Heywood, W., Myers, P., Powell, A., Meikle, G., & Nguyen, D. (2022). *National Student Safety Survey: Report on the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault among university students in 2021*. The Social Research Centre. <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2021-NSSS-National-Report.pdf>

addressing this gap, the Australian Universities Accord cannot endeavour to meet the needs of current and future students.

No Mention of Student Self-harm and Suicide

The absence of any mention of student deaths or self-harm in the Interim Report is deeply concerning, particularly when considering the impact of mental ill-health on the university experience. In 2021 alone, 322 Australians aged 18 to 24 died by suicide.¹¹ Disturbingly, between 2009 and 2019, 47 international students died by suicide in Victoria.¹² The urgency of this matter was underscored by the ACT Coroner's call to the Australian National University to collaborate more closely with mental health authorities after a student's suicide in a residential hall in 2018—a death that followed earlier warnings of suicide risk.¹³

Trauma and mental ill-health are interrelated.¹⁴ The siloing of sexual violence responses without also addressing self-harm and suicide, particularly in residential settings, is inadequate. Additional research indicates that, particularly within university settings, the demand for mental health services exceeds response capacity, and the prevalence of depression and anxiety is higher when compared to the general population.¹⁵ Given that tertiary students are a high risk group for mental ill-health and trauma, it is clear that addressing suicide and self-harm should be at the forefront of considerations regarding student wellbeing.

Within the context of sexual violence, we know that victim-survivors are at a high risk for suicide and self-harm following an experience of sexual violence. The Australian Institute of Health and

¹¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2023, August 11). *Suicide and self-harm monitoring data*. Suicide & Self-harm Monitoring. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/suicide-self-harm-monitoring/data/populations-age-groups/suicide-among-young-people>

¹² Coroners Prevention Unit. (2020, November 12). *Coronial investigation into the death of Nguyen Pham Dinh Le*. Coroners Court of Victoria. https://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-01/Nguyen_186222.pdf

¹³ Byrne, E. (2023, February 11). Coroner calls for policy changes after university suicide. *ABC News*. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-02-11/coroner-calls-for-policy-changes-after-university-suicide/10196148>

¹⁴ Nisbet, L., Halse, G., van Esbroek, E., Heywood, W., Powell, A., & Myers, P. (2022). *National Student Safety Survey: Qualitative research on experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault among university students in 2021*. The Social Research Centre. https://assets.website-files.com/61c2583e4730c0d5b054b8ab/623ba52f5687af0a108ac8ae_2021%20NSS%20Qualitative%20Report.pdf

¹⁵ Browne, V., Munro, J., & Cass, J. (2017). Under the radar: The mental health of Australian university students. *Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association*, 25(2), 51-62. <https://doi.org/10.30688/janzssa.2017.16>

Welfare identified intimate partner violence as one of the key causal risk factors of suicide and self-harm within Australian populations.¹⁶ As such, it is paramount that student self-harm and suicide is considered both independently as a risk to student safety but also when addressing sexual and domestic violence on Australian university campuses, which the Interim Report fails to do.

2. Issues with the Consultation Process

Issues for Students and Young People

The STOP Campaign has identified a range of issues with the Accord consultation process. Firstly, there is limited guidance on what submissions to the Accord Panel can and should look like on issues such as safety on campus. Secondly, it is unclear how information will be used effectively whilst also maintaining anonymity and privacy for people who are speaking about issues of safety, such as in the case of sexual violence and inadequate responses. Together, these issues present a significant barrier to young people who might otherwise wish to make a formal submission to the Government, making an already stressful task even more intimidating. We also note again that the short timeframe to provide submissions during this consultation round - which falls squarely in the mid-semester exam period of many universities across Australia - makes it difficult for students to participate meaningfully.

From our perspective, the Accord consultation process has been facilitated to best suit large university institutions and bodies which have ample resources, time, legitimacy and power, and does not support the meaningful participation of students, activists and victim-survivors. It is institutional gaslighting for decision-makers who claim to listen to students and activists to in practice act towards maintaining the harmful status quo. This is an issue that must be addressed and considered in future consultation opportunities.

We also note that it is **not** good enough to only consult student representative committees and unions on these extremely integral and widespread reforms. This is because we have found that in some circumstances student representatives are silenced through threats by university staff. In other cases, people who are in these positions directly perpetuate these harmful structures

¹⁶ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2021, November 4). *The health impact of suicide and self-inflicted injuries in Australia, 2019*.
<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/burden-of-disease/health-impact-suicide-self-inflicted-injuries-2019/contents/contribution-of-selected-risk-factors-to-the-burde>

themselves. Further, it would be a disservice to the diverse study body to say that one student could ever represent the views and experiences of everyone, but especially those who have experienced violence and harm on campus and may be disconnected from student life. Most students across the country would not know the Accord consultation process is taking place, despite many of these students having valid and valuable first-hand experiences of violence and harm. The widespread lack of knowledge and information about this process is silencing the experiences of many. It is the responsibility of all governments to ensure everyone affected can have their voice heard.

Issues for Victim-Survivors

Sexual violence has been listed as a priority area in the Interim Report, and as such, this invites people to provide further comment on this issue. Importantly, requesting submissions on potentially traumatic content (and specifically on a person's lived experience of violence and harm) within a short timeframe carries a risk of further harm and re-traumatisation. This may effectively block some victim-survivors from being able to contribute to the Accord consultation process altogether. In our view, the Accord consultation process has not been facilitated in a trauma-informed manner and the appropriate stakeholders with expert knowledge on this issue were not adequately consulted on how best to conduct this process. We believe that providing more time to make submissions, particularly for victim-survivors of sexual and domestic violence, is integral to a trauma-informed approach to this work.

We note also that the call for submissions emphasised the request for research-backed solutions. We agree that evidence-informed solutions to sexual violence on university campuses are necessary. However, this does not acknowledge how crucial the lived experiences of victim-survivors themselves are to the consultation process. It is unreasonable to expect that university students, including victim-survivors of violence, would be able to speak to the wealth of research in Australia and internationally on sexual violence - and to suggest that this means their contributions are not valid. Victim-survivors should not be expected to contextualise or articulate their experiences in an 'academic' way to be taken seriously, or to have their submissions to be considered in full by the Accord Panel.

Impact

The STOP Campaign is the only student-led grassroots organisation in Australia focusing specifically on preventing sexual violence in tertiary learning communities. Our unpaid

volunteers have committed to the Accord consultation process because we want to contribute our lived experience and expertise to the Accord Panel and make trauma-informed and evidence-based recommendations. However, when The STOP Campaign requested a short extension of a few days to prepare our in-depth submission, we were advised that our submission would not necessarily be considered **at all**. The effect of this would be that, had we been unable to provide a submission by 1 September 2023, our recommendations to reduce suicide, sexual violence and domestic violence in student accommodation settings on campus may not have been considered. Given the gravity of these issues and the importance of lived experiences to inform wider governmental processes, this would have been an inequitable and unacceptable outcome.

#IDeserveSafety Campaign

The [#IDeserveSafety](#) Campaign was launched on 2 August 2023 by The STOP Campaign, with support from End Rape On Campus Australia, Fair Agenda and the National Union of Students. The STOP Campaign was invited to Parliament to launch the Campaign by Senator David Pocock. We were joined by Senator Pocock, Senator Larissa Waters, Zoe Daniel MP, Allegra Spender MP, Monique Ryan MP and Sophie Scamps MP to launch the Campaign. We also met with Zali Steggall MP and Federal Education Minister the Hon Jason Clare MP who made time to speak with us about sexual violence within residential halls.

End Rape On Campus Australia has been advocating alongside the National Union of Students and Fair Agenda for more than six years for better university responses to sexual violence. Since 2017 when the Change the Course report was released and awareness about sexual violence on university campuses was driven further into the mainstream, there has been little change in the attitudes and responses of universities to sexual violence.¹⁷ Advocates, university students and victim-survivors share the feeling that universities need to do more to take a stance against sexual violence to protect the wellbeing and safety of students. The #IDeserveSafety Campaign was born out of this sentiment.

The #IDeserveSafety Campaign calls on the Federal Government to create an independent national oversight mechanism to hold universities accountable for failing to protect students from sexual violence. Advocates, university students and victim-survivors have seen universities across the country failing to meet their own commitments to address the issue of sexual violence. The support that universities do offer is frequently ill-equipped to meet the demands of students, and anecdotally we have found student safety and wellbeing staff are often poorly trained in responding to the complex needs of victim-survivors. Universities have a legal duty to promote and foster a safe environment, and provide support services that are informed by the needs of students.¹⁸ This is not the reality we have encountered. It has been made clear over decades of student activism movements like ours that without effective enforcement of these standards, real improvement is unlikely.

¹⁷ Nisbet, L., Halse, G., van Esbroek, E., Heywood, W., Powell, A., & Myers, P. (2022). *National Student Safety Survey: Qualitative research on experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault among university students in 2021*. The Social Research Centre.

https://assets.website-files.com/61c2583e4730c0d5b054b8ab/623ba52f5687af0a108ac8ae_2021%20NSS%20Qualitative%20Report.pdf

¹⁸ *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* (Cth) pt 2.3.

To learn more about the #IDeserveSafety Campaign, watch the launch video (on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)). To learn more about the call for the Albanese Government to urgently intervene to address university failures to prevent and respond appropriately to sexual violence, read End Rape On Campus Australia's [Open Letter](#).

#IDeserveSafety Survey: Experiences of Violence, Harm and Betrayal

Summary of the Survey

Sexual violence impacts everyone in university environments and is perpetrated across all levels of these institutions. Universities, residential halls and student accommodation providers have repeatedly failed to provide safe learning environments for students, staff and visitors. Our submission to the Accord Panel includes first-hand experiences of violence and harm in Australian universities, with particular focus on residential halls and student accommodation, and outlines recommendations for change.

The STOP Campaign's final submission to the Accord Panel is informed by the #IDeserveSafety Survey, which was open to any individual with an experience of harm in a university context. This included but was not limited to university students, alumni, staff and contractors. The Survey called specifically for experiences of sexual harm in residential halls, but was not limited to these experiences. Respondents were invited to share:

- Their experience/s of any form of sexual violence, domestic violence, suicide and/or a critical incident in a residential hall or on-campus accommodation setting.
- The impact/s of those experiences on respondents personally and/or on others involved.
- How the residential hall and/or university dealt with these circumstances and how that affected the people involved.
- How accessible and/or identifiable the reporting and support options were to respondents, and their experience of using those options.
- Any other matters respondents wanted to share on these issues.

The Survey also asked for any recommendations respondents had for the Accord Panel and for universities in their responses to sexual violence. All data was collected anonymously or confidentially (for respondents who indicated their preference to provide their response over the phone).

The Survey was open until 11:59pm AEST on 1 September 2023, which was the closing date of the Accord consultation process. It was important that we allowed respondents as much time as possible to share their experiences with us, noting that this period is typically assignment-heavy

for many university students. The STOP Campaign requested a short extension to the submission deadline to allow us, as a group of victim-survivors, students and volunteers, to carefully consider, interpret and present the results of the Survey to the Accord Panel.

Summary of the Outcomes

We opened the Survey for 3 weeks - the same amount of time this Accord consultation process was open. In that time, we received a total of **52** responses and conducted follow up confidential phone calls with **11** respondents and follow up confidential email conversations with **2** respondents. We received responses from students (84.6%), residents (71.2%), student leaders (30.8%), alumni (36.5%), staff (19.2%), contractors (3.8%), organisation representatives (1.9%), counsellors (1.9%) and family members (1.9%). Note that many people ticked multiple of these as holding different roles throughout their university experience.

We asked 3 substantive questions in the Survey:

1. What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?
2. What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?
3. What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

These 3 questions allowed written responses so that we could gather the true extent of the lived experience of harm on university campuses. By dividing our questions between experiences and impacts we were able to clearly identify the specific harms of sexual violence and institutional responses to sexual violence as well as the specific contexts in which this harm is perpetrated. This allows both the contexts and the harms to be addressed in our recommendations. The option to provide recommendations also enabled respondents to voice their own opinion on changes which are required based on their experiences. The recommendations we have provided in this submission reflect the recommendations provided by the Survey respondents.

In addition to the 3 primary questions discussed above, the Survey also asked respondents if they would feel at risk sharing their experiences if this Survey weren't anonymous. We asked

this question because institutions are known to retaliate against individuals connected with university communities (as students, alumni, leaders, staff, etc.) if they speak out about harm and violence occurring on campus. This is instigated by universities through blacklisting students and staff from activities, forums and experiences, and intimidation, for example through universities requiring their students to sign non-disclosure agreements. In response to this question,

- 61.5% of respondents said they would feel at risk if they weren't able to remain anonymous.
- 23.1% of respondents said they were unsure.
- 15.4% of respondents said they would not feel at risk if they weren't able to remain anonymous.

The large number of people who expressed feeling unsafe if their identity were known demonstrates the immense fear of retaliation and harm by institutions, perpetrators and the general public. Victim-survivors and their supporters are often targeted when they speak out about sexual violence, especially when making comment about their experiences of institutional betrayal and harm within powerful systems.

This section summarises the themes of the #IDeserveSafety responses. All full responses to the Survey are contained in Appendix 3. In analysing the data, it became clear that there were unfortunately many consistencies between the responses.

- 46.2% of respondents mentioned disclosing to their university and/or residence and experiencing dismissive and insensitive responses.
- 50% of respondents mentioned a lack of consequences for perpetrators.
- 26.9% of respondents said that spiking and intoxication had contributed to instances of sexual assault.
- 32.7% of respondents expressed fear of running into perpetrators on campus.
- 32.7% of respondents specified negative academic performance as a direct impact of their sexual violence.
- 50% of respondents identified harmful mental health impacts including PTSD, suicide attempts and hospitalisation.

These common responses form the basis of our analysis which is presented in terms of the experiences of violence and harm, the experience of responses to violence and harm and the impacts of violence and harm.

Survey Responses - Experiences of and Responses to Violence and Harm

Warning: This section includes excerpts from responses to the #IDeserveSafety Survey. These excerpts describe sexual violence, suicide and self-harm, mental ill-health, trauma and institutional betrayal.

As part of the #IDeserveSafety Survey, The STOP Campaign asked people across the country to share their experiences of violence and harm on university campuses. We asked:

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

This question was deliberately phrased to capture a wide range of harmful experiences within residential hall settings. We avoided using specific or narrow terms (such as 'rape' or 'sexual assault') to allow respondents to share experiences of any form of violence that they felt comfortable sharing, as we understand that it can be difficult to characterise or articulate the type of violence experienced. The range of responses received demonstrates the nuanced, complex and sometimes covert aspects of harm occurring on university campuses.

We identified **10** key themes related to experiences of violence and harm in university and the institutional responses to that harm in the responses to the Survey, which are discussed further below. The 10 key themes are:

1. Sexual violence
2. Intoxication
3. Drink spiking
4. Culture of misogyny
5. Voyeurism
6. Staff to student sexual violence
7. Institutional responses to sexual violence

8. International student experiences
9. LGBTQIA+ student experiences
10. Lack of consequences for perpetrators

The following section of this submission includes specific responses from the Survey to illustrate each of the key themes. It is structured as follows:

1. Experiences of Violence and Harm

- a. Sexual violence
 - i. Rape and sexual assault
 - ii. Sexual harassment
- b. Intoxication
- c. Drink spiking
- d. Culture of misogyny
- e. Voyeurism
- f. Staff to student sexual violence

2. Responses to Violence and Harm

- a. Institutional responses
 - i. Residential Hall staff
 - ii. University staff
- b. International student experiences
- c. LGBTQIA+ student experiences
- d. Lack of consequences for perpetrators

Experiences of Violence and Harm

The violence and harm experienced by those who chose to share their experiences demonstrates the culture of sexual violence and misogyny that pervades university culture. It also reveals the vast range of harms that exists across all levels of the university system, including but not limited to, residential halls, student accommodation, the classroom, at university social events and during sport games. Additionally, the Survey results signify how sexual violence is perpetrated by staff to students, staff to staff and students to students. The harms outlined in the participants' experiences are the result of intentional acts of sexual violence and are preventable acts of sexual ignorance.

Any form of sexual violence is unacceptable. Behaviours such as rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, drink spiking and voyeurism are blatant displays of criminal acts intended to cause harm. These behaviours are deeply ingrained in misogynistic attitudes toward women, gender-diverse people, people from migrant backgrounds and people with disability. Perpetrators who engage in these behaviours must be held accountable for their actions. They must understand the harm they have caused and how this harm has continued ramifications. Without this accountability, a change in future behaviour is unlikely and the prevention of sexual violence will not be achieved.

Whilst harm is often intended in most acts of sexual violence, there are instances where increased awareness and education around what constitutes ethical sex and consent would effectively prevent sexual violence. In the respondents' experiences, there were common instances of non-consent that are often attuned to college culture. For example, when high levels of alcohol are involved, an individual can be incapable of giving their consent for any sexual act. Similarly, when there are unequal power relationships involved, such as between staff and students, it is impossible for consent to be given freely and voluntarily. Both of these situations present and highlight an alarming lack of understanding and respect for the basic principles of respect and equity. A significant amount of harm was experienced by the Survey respondents, of which the impacts are further detailed below on page 54.

By actively educating the community on ethical sex and consent in an effective peer-facilitated model, knowledge bases and cultural attitudes can shift to holistically combat ignorance and misogyny together.

Many of the respondents' experiences were preventable. It is imperative that action is taken to prevent future harm.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence includes any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or unwanted sexual comments or advances directed against a person using coercion or force, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim-survivor, and in any setting.¹⁹ Rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment were the most common forms of violence discussed in the Survey responses.

Almost every single woman in my life has experienced some form of sexual violence at university. A member of my family was sexually assaulted in her first year of university by someone at her college. My good friend was sexually assaulted in our first year by one of our friends. We had to continue seeing him living on campus, being moved from college to college for repeatedly assaulting women. I have dealt with young men at my college harassing first year girls, and have heard stories of the sexual violence escalating with each year that passes. I have been harassed, grabbed and groped by men at college parties and out dancing with my university friends. I have been followed down the road to my university college at night. I have friends who have experienced sexual violence but do not recognise it as such - either because they didn't know how to characterise what has happened to them, or because they were gaslit by people around them to play it down or to let it go.

- Anonymous respondent #3

a) Rape and Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is any act of a sexual nature carried out against a person without that person's consent through the use of physical force, intimidation or coercion (such as threats and blackmail). This includes rape, attempted rape, aggravated sexual assault, assault with a weapon, indecent assault, penetration by objects, forced sexual activity that did not end in penetration and attempts to force a person into sexual activity.²⁰

¹⁹ World Health Organisation. (2022). *Sexual violence*. Violence Info.

<https://apps.who.int/violence-info/sexual-violence>

²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2017). *Personal Safety Survey 2016* (4906.0).

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/personal-safety-australia/2016>

I was assaulted on campus when I was 17. It was horrific.

- Anonymous respondent #31

I experienced assault as a young adolescent. I was so excited to leave my home town and attend university, live on campus and make friends. It was one of the worst experiences of my life - and that is saying something. The culture on campus is indisputably unsafe and toxic.

- Anonymous respondent #44

I experienced rape and sexual assault.

- Anonymous respondent #36

I was raped in my residential accommodation by a non-student and stalked by a separate person who one day gained access to the building.

- Anonymous respondent #38

Last year, I went to my friend's apartment to get ready for the student association's start of semester party. Here, I met her roommates, including a new student who had just started his degree. A man, who after hearing us talking about my past sexual assault, chose to drug and repeatedly sexually assault me based on what he'd just heard. I was sexually assaulted at the university bar, which was witnessed. I was sexually assaulted at another location, also witnessed. I was then raped in the public bathroom at the university residence, and the nightmare only ended when security staff asked for the door to be opened...Five days prior to my assault, my friend had rung me feeling unsafe because this man - her new roommate - had told her he'd been twice falsely accused of sexual assault in the past, and had then threatened to punch her on another day...Five days later this man's behaviour escalated and he repeatedly sexually assaulted a student - me.

- Anonymous respondent #51

Whilst living on campus, I have experienced sexual violence on three separate occasions. The first time, I was locked in a room. The second time was a stealthing incident. I don't want to go into the details of the third, however it was the most traumatic for me.

- Anonymous respondent #29

I personally have had sexual experiences where physical things were done to me by the other person without consent, and I simply froze. Upon talking to this person about it at a later date, they genuinely did not know that what they did was wrong, because they had seen it so often in porn.

- Anonymous respondent #42

I was grabbed on the arse multiple times by another residential hall's player whilst playing AFL, and goaded with "I bet you like that" comments to try and get me to retaliate.

- Anonymous respondent #22

At a party at [a residential college] at the University of Sydney an older male student ripped open my button up shirt by putting his two hands between where the fabric met, and pulled open the shirt - the buttons flew off.

- Anonymous respondent #47

I experienced sexual harassment during an orientation week party during my first semester. A man who I was being flirty with reached down to my crotch and I curved my body and hips away from him. Then he moved with me and kept pulling on my jeans. I eventually moved his hand away with my hand, which didn't stop him, so I told him I was going to go get another drink and then I left the party.

- Anonymous respondent #13

b) Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for a sexual favour or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature (including making sexual statements or jokes) in circumstances which could reasonably make the person who is being harassed feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. This includes engaging in any unwelcome behaviour that is demeaning because of a person's sex.²¹ Sexual harassment can be a single event or a pattern of behaviours which may be overt or subtle.

It wasn't uncommon to hear of or see harassment and unwanted sexual advances at social events, parties, and so on, sober or not. Some students, without providing identifying

²¹ *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT) s 58; Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) s 28A.*

information, were harassed for long periods of time online within student online social spaces which needed significant oversight to moderate.

- Anonymous respondent #1

People failing to learn and respect boundaries (i.e. people's personal spaces and time). This can result in actions resembling sexual harassment. For example, walking into people's rooms while they are asleep or getting changed or failing to leave somebody's room when they are asked.

- Anonymous respondent #11

Intoxication

Being under the influence of drugs, alcohol or any other substance does not automatically mean that a person cannot consent to sexual activity. However, if a person is intoxicated to a level that they are incapable of communicating their free and voluntary agreement to sexual activity, they cannot consent and any ensuing sexual activity constitutes sexual violence. A person who is unconscious or asleep cannot consent. People who experience sexual violence while being intoxicated may struggle to recognise their experience as sexually violent due to harmful victim-blaming stereotypes and myths that are reinforced across society and within cultural norms.

I was assaulted by a member of my residential hall and a member of another residential hall at the same time. I was so drunk I couldn't walk when it happened, but both of my perpetrators carried me back to one of their residences, where I was later assaulted by them both. I was confused and scared and felt like it was somehow my fault. It took me almost six months to come to terms with the fact that I had been assaulted.

- Anonymous respondent #25

It took me a long time to see [my experience] as an assault because attitudes around drunk sex are generally that [non-consensual drunk sex] is acceptable. We did not receive adequate information about the complexities of alcohol and consent. When I first moved into my residential hall at ANU last year, the most alcohol consent training we got was along the lines of, 'it's going to happen so just make sure you're not too drunk and you stay with your friends'. This is not adequate.

- Anonymous respondent #18

When I was 18 living in student accommodation I was sexually assaulted by another female in my room at college. This occurred after a night drinking at an event hosted by the college. We had kissed earlier in the night, however as I was heavily intoxicated, I fell asleep. I woke up briefly to her above me before falling asleep once again. The next morning I found hickeys on my breasts and was missing a barbell on my right nipple piercing.

- Anonymous respondent #33

When I was a Resident Advisor, a resident on my wing was taken advantage of and sexually assaulted by a male exchange student who she'd known for a few weeks. They had been talking over messages and in person, they went out to a local uni night and were intimately involved while both intoxicated. At the end of the night she was put to bed, heavily intoxicated by her friends who told the boy (living on the same wing as her) not to go to her room. The door was left unlocked. He took advantage of this and went into her room. They apparently did not have sex until the next morning. But she cannot remember anything and woke up to him naked with her.

- Anonymous respondent #41

An older male student brought me to his room to do shots for pre-drinks when going out. I then realised he wasn't hosting pre-drinks and it was just us. He picked me up and lay me down on his desk and aggressively kissed me and fondled my body, while also pouring me more shots. He got mad I didn't have sex with him that night and tormented me for years every time I saw him. I later found out that this man was known as a notorious spiker and that he had been caught spiking multiple people's drinks at commencement (a ball event for the hall at the beginning of the year).

- Anonymous respondent #37

Drink Spiking

Drink spiking is when someone puts a substance, such as drugs or alcohol, in another person's drink without their knowledge or consent.²² The prevalence of drink spiking at university events continues to be normalised as a common experience among peers and university staff can fail to take it seriously.

²² Alcohol and Drug Foundation. (2021, May 3). *What is drink spiking?* Insights. <https://adf.org.au/insights/what-is-drink-spiking/>

My friend suggested that we go out for drinks to celebrate O-Week [the first week of the university semester]. I only had one drink but it completely knocked me out. Doctors suggested that someone might have spiked my drink.

- Anonymous respondent #19

We were having drinks while waiting for our friend to come back from an academic dinner event. When she returned we heard her come onto the floor so we walked out and found her completely wasted with a man studying at ANU but not from our college. He had his arms around her and was trying to take her to her room. Once he realised we would not let that happen because she clearly could not consent, he left. The next morning she came into my room asking 'what happened last night? I don't remember anything after the dinner.' That's when she told us that she only had one glass of wine at dinner and the man who brought her home was sitting next to her. He had spiked her drink.

- Anonymous respondent #37

In a college-only harbour cruise, I was drugged and experienced severe delusional symptoms, eventually landing in the hospital. Whilst I cannot remember a large portion of the night, I believe I was not sexually assaulted, but only because there were Red Frogs [members of the Red Frog support and safeguarding program] there helping me get home (instead of going out after, as I was pressured to do).

- Anonymous respondent #46

A man, who after hearing us talking about my past sexual assault, chose to drug and repeatedly sexually assault me based on what he'd just heard.

- Anonymous respondent #51

Culture of Misogyny

Misogyny is the socially ingrained and structural process through which men assert power and control, often through violent means, over others (predominantly women). Although misogyny is commonly understood as a contempt for women, misogyny is deeply connected to other social norms and ideas about gender roles, power and control. Misogyny is a symptom of patriarchy.²³

²³ Mallett, X. (n.d.). Cultural misogyny and why men's aggression to women is so often expressed through sex. *The Conversation*.
<https://theconversation.com/cultural-misogyny-and-why-mens-aggression-to-women-is-so-often-expressed>

Misogynistic behaviour includes overt forms of sexual violence and also victim-blaming, inappropriate and demeaning actions disguised as ‘fun and games’, as well as the normalisation of unacceptable language and jokes. This behaviour perpetuates a toxic culture that objectifies and devalues women and gender-diverse people.

I have been told that sexual violence is an unavoidable part of studying, especially while living on-campus. I have been told by women in my life that they wish they could have taught me better how to avoid sexual violence, but who have never spoken to their sons and brothers about how to “avoid” raping women. I have been given a myriad of tips about how to not get assaulted, all of which limit my ability to move about the world freely like men - don’t drink, don’t go out, don’t make eye contact, don’t walk too slow, don’t wear headphones, don’t smile at him (but also don’t stare, otherwise he’ll think you’re mad at him). It’s exhausting, contradictory, sexist, and completely unacceptable.

- Anonymous respondent #3

This isn’t something that happened to me, but my best friend. We had just moved from the University of Newcastle to the University of New England and she was living on campus, doing long distance with her boyfriend. She had heard some people around calling her “pretty little dancer” which we thought was harmless, as she is quite petite and used to dance professionally. We later found out that the boys in her hall had a bet going on, for who could make her cheat on her boyfriend first. And pretty little dancer was the nickname they gave her when they ranked the girls on the floor based on “fuck-ability” (I’m assuming that means how “fuckable” they think they are).

- Anonymous respondent #16

When I started a women’s fitness program at my residential hall, I started to receive death and rape threats. I was called a ‘feminazi’ and a ‘manbasher’ for posting in the residential hall facebook group about when our sessions were on. I also started a sexual violence awareness campaign in my hall, of which all of our ‘meet the team’ posters were defaced with dicks drawn to my mouth, eyes poked out, with ‘slut’ written on my face, and other horrible things. What made this so bad was that the staff, including the Community Coordinator (a student-staff position responsible for pastoral care and support of the leadership team), didn’t back me up or

[d-through-sex-157680](#); Srivastava, K., Chaudhury, S., Bhat, P. S., & Sahu, S. (2017). Misogyny, feminism, and sexual harassment. *Industrial psychiatry journal*, 26(2), 111–113. https://doi.org/10.4103/ipj.ipj_32_18

take any of these posters down. They would simply walk past them and when I would bring up to staff about how I was afraid of someone coming into my room and hurting me or raping me, they didn't listen or do anything about it.

- Anonymous respondent #37

Throughout my time living in a residential hall, there have been multiple whispers of sexual assault and harassment going around, and obviously other students talk about this. So many times I have been in conversations where someone mentions e.g. 'X experienced stealthing'. First of all, the follow-up question to this by many men is always 'what is stealthing?' which is shocking that people still do not know what that is. Then, once it is explained to them they say 'what? that's assault??' or 'that's not that bad though, right?'. So many people do not even realise that they or their friends are perpetuating harm, because there is not enough education in universities to teach them what is right and wrong when it comes to sex.

- Anonymous respondent #42

A group of boys at my hall wrote a 'scavenger hunt' that involved acts including 'put cum in the communal hand sanitiser' and 'have sex with X person's girlfriend'. One of the boys who was actively involved in writing this list was suspended briefly from ANU, but a year or so later (after I left my hall) I heard that he was now the President of the Hall.

- Anonymous respondent #25

Voyeurism

Voyeurism is the act of secretly observing others when they are naked or engaging in sexual activity without their knowledge or consent.²⁴ This invasive behaviour can severely undermine one's sense of safety and privacy.

I have a friend (female) who was taking a shower when one of the other residents (male) in her unit took a photo of her showering from underneath the shower door. This was without consent, from someone who was practically a stranger to her. She doesn't feel safe in shared accommodation with people she doesn't know or trust. It has made her, me and others uncomfortable having showers without being able to lock the main bathroom doors. I felt able to trust my roommates before but now I don't. I can't have a shower without spending the entire

²⁴ Popa, T., & Delcea, C. (2020). Voyeurism and scopophilia. *Theoretical-experimental Models in Sexual and Paraphilic Dysfunctions*, 1(1), 64.

time looking at the bottom of the door to see if there is a camera down there. It makes you wonder if he or others had been doing it before and whether other intimate photos are out there and haven't had the chance to be deleted.

- Anonymous respondent #20

I also learned of other instances of inappropriate behaviour exhibited by my assailant, including property damage, bullying and voyeurism in residential hall bathrooms.

- Anonymous respondent #8

Staff to Student Sexual Violence

Sexual violence perpetrated by staff members towards students is a uniquely alarming aspect of violence and harm in the university context. The power imbalance between staff and students means that these victim-survivors face significant barriers to reporting or accessing support due to fear of further victimisation and/or retaliation.

In my few years in Senior Resident and Community Coordinator roles at a university residential hall, I experienced and witnessed sexual violence, harassment, bullying, victim blaming and institutional betrayal. I supported students who had been sexually assaulted, sexually harassed, and stalked by staff members within their respective residential halls and student accommodation. In one instance a student was being stalked by a security guard who was employed by Unilodge. I was asked to report this to the university on their behalf so they could remain anonymous, as they were terrified of what might happen to them if he found out they had reported. Another Head of Hall had a reputation for 'sleeping around' with students and 'grooming' some of them into leadership positions and staff positions. Despite this being known across the university in student and staff circles, he moved into various student life roles at other universities and continues to be in a similar role to this day... probably still abusing his power to sexually violate and control young students in his care.

- Anonymous respondent #48

I was in my final year of high school when I was sexually assaulted during a special program in university for students interested in politics and to help them prepare for university. The perpetrator was the university lecturer of that class and he sexually assaulted me in the classroom. And there was another male teacher there present who didn't even recognise or notice what was happening and it was an extremely unsafe circumstance. This was my first

sexual touching experience. It had a major impact on my view of sex, sexuality and sexual touching, and just created this massive distrust around men.

- Anonymous respondent #12 (phone call)

During my time at university, tutors and lecturers were unnecessarily introducing sexualised content into their courses, being really sleazy towards female students and engaging in disgusting misogynistic behaviour... [For] example, I witnessed and was subjected to a male senior lecturer who upskirted and stared at all the female students in the tutorial and after this, he stood up with a visible erection in class. This was in the 1990's and he still works at the ANU to this day. I would witness the same and other male senior lecturers sexually harass female staff colleagues too with unwanted 'flirtatious' attention or making overly familiar or inappropriate comments.

- Anonymous respondent #26 (phone call)

Responses to Violence and Harm

When a victim-survivor discloses an experience of sexual violence, the way someone responds can have a profound impact on that person's mental health and recovery. Often, it can be more harmful for victim-survivors to disclose their experience of sexual assault and receive a negative response, than to never tell anyone at all. Such negative responses can include dismissive, unbelieving and/or unsupportive responses, victim-blaming and active support for the perpetrator.

The Survey findings reveal that victim-survivors were failed and betrayed by their university institutions which are meant to safeguard their wellbeing. Participants identified they have been ignored, humiliated and blamed for their experiences of sexual violence. Furthermore, perpetrators were not held accountable and in some instances, were given positions of leadership and power. The diverse experiences of victim-survivors, specifically LGBTQIA+ individuals, were disregarded and at times, identity was used as a weapon to undermine their experiences of sexual violence. The failure of universities to protect their students and the enduring impacts this has caused will be explored in the following section.

In order to prevent such harm that is caused by unacceptable institutional responses, several considerations must be addressed. Firstly, universities must ensure that all employees are suitably qualified to be considered for their role. They must undertake safeguarding screening, especially noting that people as young as 16 years old live in residential halls. Further to this, they must undergo intensive education and training on trauma, sexual violence, mental health, responding to disclosures and other related matters. This is essential to ensuring that their behaviours and responses are survivor-centred, trauma-informed and compassionate. A significant cultural shift is needed in these institutions so that victim-survivors are at the forefront of any response.

The further harm caused from substandard institutional responses to victim-survivors is too common and must stop now.

Institutional Responses to Sexual Violence

To address sexual violence on campus, it is crucial to evaluate the institutions' role in handling these incidents. The efficacy and appropriateness of their responses are paramount in shaping victim-survivors' post-incident experiences and overall campus safety.

a) Residential Hall Staff

Residential hall staff have responsibilities to support the wellbeing and safety of all people in their residential hall or student accommodation. This extends to student-staff positions where students are expected to support their peers, such as by responding to disclosures of sexual violence or providing crisis support during a mental health crisis or critical incident. The following quotes exemplify the inadequacy of responses from residential hall staff in responding to incidents of harm.

In the first few weeks of living in a residential hall at the ANU, I experienced hazing, sexual harassment, stalking and abuse by my peers... I actually brought up how uncomfortable this made me during a FemChats night (regular chats with women and non-binary students) and I was basically told by the student leaders of that session to suck it up and that it's not a big deal.

- Anonymous respondent #37

When I lived on campus, I reported an indecent assault on behalf of my friend. Their response was to interrogate her (she denied it as a result - in her words it was "social suicide to report") and break my anonymity (I reported confidentially).

- Anonymous respondent #2

I reported a serious safety concern to the head of hall at my college. I believed there was a genuine safety threat of potential sexual violence. I asked the Head of Hall to discuss my concerns with the ANU. He said, "how will you even know I've had this conversation?" And "I also have the reputation of the hall to uphold." It was a legitimately appalling response.

- Anonymous respondent #5

Multiple failures to keep women safe on campus, including 2 sexual assaults at [two residential colleges at the University of New England] in which the offender was welcomed back to campus with open arms, while the women were asked to move if they wanted to feel safe. One of the women was told that the fact that she had autism meant that she had a hard time saying no (which was not true) by the ex-Head of [one of the colleges]. [Name removed] is also unfit to be the Head of college and removed a student who was being treated for mental health problems by removing [the student's] card access to the college whilst she was in a mental health facility.

This student was made to go to class in dirty clothes (2 days old including underwear) and no shoes and was locked out of her room for multiple days.

- Anonymous respondent #23

The perpetrator had also sexually assaulted other members of the college. When I went forward to the Head of Hall, nothing was done. I also did not go forward to the Head of Hall about sexual assault by a member of a different college, as she was friends with [the Head of Hall] on Facebook. Given my previous experience I didn't think anything would be done, and I was worried about it getting back to him. I now work in the community sector and was doing a course where a current staff member in a wellbeing area at the ANU spoke about colluding with perpetrators of sexual assault and how they felt sorry for [perpetrators]. This indicates to me there are multiple levels of staffing in the ANU where it would not be safe to go to.

- Anonymous respondent #24

I spoke to staff at my residential hall and they said there was nothing they could do unless I made a formal complaint. I asked about kitchen hours and they said these had to be "mutually agreed upon" by myself and the perpetrator which is simply ridiculous. The response from my college was awful because the administrative staff "liked" these boys and therefore didn't do anything about it. The only person who was good in this situation was my case manager, but I should have been supported within my college too.

- Anonymous respondent #29

My friend was outside our hall having a cigarette in the carpark, when one of the men who lived at our hall grabbed her, pulled her to the floor and held her down hard trying to take her clothes off and rape her. She screamed and someone came out to see what was happening and he got off her. When she told me about this I decided to submit an incident form to my Head of Hall (keeping her anonymous and with her consent), and I never received a response.

- Anonymous respondent #37

I was groped after an O-Week party. My friends and I called it out when it happened and I reported it to a Senior Resident the next day. The Senior Resident lodged an incident report but the Head of Hall didn't deem it a sexual violence case so nothing was done immediately. After rumours started to spread amongst the leadership team about it, a meeting was called with the Head of Hall and all student leaders at the hall. I was made to explain what happened in front of

everyone and even when I was crying the meeting wasn't stopped. Finally some action came about and there were safety practices put in place so that the perpetrator couldn't be in the kitchen at the same time as me. However these were 'inconvenient' for him, so the Head of Hall changed them without informing me. He would purposely cook as close to me as possible in the kitchen and attempt to intimidate me. He even wrote a note about how I was lying and put it on his door so that it spread among the community. The Head of Hall did nothing about this, and I only really felt supported after I reported it to one of the student wellbeing teams.

- Anonymous respondent #39

Across my university, each residential hall has different responses to dealing with sexual assault and harassment allegations. A hall that I was at last year had a "three-strike" rule: if 3 different people came forward with 3 different experiences of sexual assault or harassment, the person accused would be moved out of the college. With any claims less than three, nothing would be done unless on request, but the leaders of the hall were still unable to move the accused out. This "three-strike" rule also applies to deviant/drunken behaviour and noise complaints. If an individual got three official noise complaints they would be moved out of the college. Having the same disciplinary action in regards to sexual assault and harassment and noise complaints is ridiculous.

- Anonymous respondent #43

I found no support from college, in which my Dean of Residents told the college leadership (which included me) that "there were no incidences", there was no follow up on my physical or mental wellbeing, and there was no action taken to figure out who drugged me.

- Anonymous respondent #46

I was sexually assaulted by my ex-girlfriend at my residential hall... She lived at Unilodge ANU and was a Senior Resident. There were three formal reports filed from 3 different people and an Incident report written by another Unilodge Senior Resident, yet nothing was done to her position. She not only kept her Senior Resident position but she was again rehired. I simply don't understand how a Unilodge staff member who knows that a Senior Resident sexually assaulted someone and received 4 complaints about this person could rehire her as a leader, where she has access to people's rooms and is expected to provide pastoral care. Another similar situation happened but it was a male perpetrator, and Unilodge did not rehire him as a Senior Resident the following year.

- Anonymous respondent #6

b) University Staff

University staff are responsible for ensuring student safety and support. However, respondents spoke about the further harms caused by those in student safety and wellbeing areas, including those in counselling, crisis response and case management roles. Most alarmingly, some identified that senior staff members were also ill-equipped to respond to incidents, despite many being responsible for leading violence prevention and response initiatives on campus.

Countless senior staff members would regularly blame alcohol for assault and shame victim-survivors for their 'behaviour' that 'caused' them to be raped. The Head of Counselling at the university told me promoting alcohol was promoting rape, a senior executive of the university told 100 students in a session at our hall that students can expect to be raped if they drink, and another Head of Hall would actively blame students who disclosed they were raped if they had had any alcohol when it happened. The result of this is a complete distrust in the people who are meant to be there to support students, and it reinforced harmful rape myths and stereotypes that alcohol rapes people... when in actual fact people rape people.

- Anonymous respondent #48

One of my housemates got physically violent on one occasion... we immediately went [to the institution] for support. They turned us away and told us we would ruin her life if we went to the police. We received no support and had to figure this out ourselves, as international students in a foreign country...I ended up moving to another city because... I wanted to get away from that educational institution who was only focused on protecting the offender to avoid bad PR.

- Anonymous respondent #35

Despite me trying to communicate that something bad had happened, and my friend telling staff she'd witnessed 'multiple non-consensual acts' committed against me, they didn't ask if I needed an ambulance or the police. They left me in my friend's bed, in an apartment where the perpetrator lived and so had access. I was terrified and unable to help myself or see clearly. The non-response of staff that night harmed me. It exacerbated my trauma, and meant the perpetrator was able to find me the next day and harass and intimidate me. This prevented me from going to the hospital. The assault took place on a Wednesday night, but it wasn't until late Friday afternoon that a staff member attempted to contact me. This is not good enough.

- Anonymous respondent #51

There have been many instances (3) where I have been sexually assaulted on campus. For instance, once I had someone grab me and try to drag me into his room... I brought it up to one of the student wellbeing teams at the ANU, who told me it doesn't count as assault. I refused to report anything after that.

- Anonymous respondent #34

International Student Experiences

International students face unique challenges that can compound their experiences of sexual violence and trauma. This includes difficulties communicating their experiences, accessing local support services, visa and immigration constraints and exacerbated feelings of isolation.

I had to withdraw from university courses for that semester which then carried implications for my student visa (I had to extend my student visa but one of the criteria to obtain a visa in Australia is satisfying the health requirement. I really struggled with my mental health at that time which made it difficult for me to obtain another student visa to continue my degree in Australia. It ended up being a long and stressful process involving appointments with specialists, providing additional documentation, psychiatric assessments etc., which only made my mental health worse). Once I returned for the second semester... I ended up failing and having to withdraw again (and extending my student visa again).

- Anonymous respondent #19

A student killed themselves in their room. When they were found by the university staff, the staff member and emergency services personnel put them in a body bag in the middle of the day and wheeled them out in front of everyone who was around. No warning. No respect. No dignity for the person who had died. It was traumatising and there was no follow up. No changes were made to how Unilodge handled this issue nor were there any referrals to services on campus. The person was an international student who was isolated from their friends and family and in a domestic violence situation. It makes me sick that our unilodges, residences, universities and governments care more about making money off international students than keeping them safe.

- Anonymous respondent #50

One of my housemates got physically violent on one occasion.... We received no support and had to figure this out ourselves, as international students in a foreign country.

- Anonymous respondent #35

It was incredibly confusing to arrive in a new country, experience sexual harassment and not know that my perpetrator would suffer no criminal repercussions. International students navigate these barriers alone.

- Anonymous respondent #52

LGBTQIA+ Student Experiences

The experiences of LGBTQIA+ students have been frequently overlooked and minimised. Historically, their voices have been silenced when it comes to addressing the disproportionate levels of violence, harm and betrayal by institutions that they experience. Members of LGBTQIA+ communities face intricate challenges that encompass aspects of identity, access, support and recognition.

It's disappointing to see how despite [staff] saying they support sexual violence victims it only matters if [the violence is] between a male - female relationship and only if it is penetrative rape.

- Anonymous respondent #6

I also have struggled with my sexuality, as I am bisexual and one of my perpetrators was the first girl I had ever dated. It has taken me two years to get to the point where I can comfortably consider women romantically, as my first queer relationship ended in me being sexually assaulted by my girlfriend. I will never recover from the hurt my perpetrators have caused me.

- Anonymous respondent #25

I was assaulted in student accommodation at a Group of 8 university (the University of Sydney) and because I present as a transmasculine person, I was not able to access a lot of the post-assault services which were geared towards cisgender women. When I attempted to report what I experienced, the University complaints team not only refused to provide me with any communication-based adjustments (such as scheduling interviews in the afternoons due to the impact of my disability on sleep) to allow me to accessibly participate in the complaints process, but also failed to refer me to the Safer Communities team. When I attempted to access support from the SRC [Student Representative Council] caseworkers and from the NTEU [National Tertiary Education Union], my testimony was met with ableism and transphobia: I was deadnamed, for example.

- Anonymous respondent #30

As [my] sexual assault was between 2 females, management at my college found it hard to believe and believed my claims to be unsubstantiated. For the next month I lived with my assaulter, while I experienced daily panic attacks and an overall dramatic decline in my mental health.

- Anonymous respondent #33

Lack of Consequences for Perpetrators

The ways that institutions address and deliver consequences to perpetrators of violence and harm is critical to victim-survivor support and campus safety. In many instances, the lack of response and appropriate actions taken against perpetrators, even after they were found to be culpable, was disheartening to victim-survivors. The use of appropriate actions and consequences for perpetrators of violence and harm is essential to keeping other students safe.

When I lived on campus there were countless times where survivors of a sexual violence incident which had been perpetrated against them at a residential hall had to continue to co-exist with the perpetrator for up to 6 months. The maximum penalty given to the perpetrator was limited shared kitchen hours. Yet, they were still allowed to attend events conducted by the hall (including those including the consumption of alcohol and where people were vulnerable) and share common spaces and bathrooms.

- Anonymous respondent #4

There is limited recourse, support and accommodations for anyone who endures sexual violence incidents and encounters, and there's barely anything done after an incident occurs. It more or less gets ignored and endured, and a lot of the onus is placed on those who have endured it.

- Anonymous respondent #1

Ultimately they made the alleged perpetrator a Residential Advisor, but also the Men's Officer! Men's Officer is meant to be a guide for all male students at college!!

- Anonymous respondent #2

The university's decision to impose a mere six-month suspension for rape has left me feeling betrayed and unprotected. Most distressing is the fact that, upon his return, he was permitted to

engage in clinical placements at a hospital, working with vulnerable individuals. When consulted about his placement, I expressed grave concerns about his lack of participation in programs addressing consent, awareness, and respect. My reservations were brushed aside, and he was allowed to continue without undergoing psychological assessment or proper training. This disregard for the safety of vulnerable persons deeply troubles me.

- Anonymous respondent #8

We had to rely on a whisper network to figure out who perpetrators were because the only thing residential management would do - if anything at all - would be to quietly shuffle them off to UniLodge (and then we'd have to warn people there too).

- Anonymous respondent #17

[There were] 2 sexual assaults at [two residential colleges at the University of New England] in which the offender was welcomed back to campus with open arms, while the women were asked to move if they wanted to feel safe.

- Anonymous respondent #23

The perpetrator had also sexually assaulted other members of the college. When I went forward to the Head of Hall, nothing was done.

- Anonymous respondent #24

My friend was outside our hall having a cigarette in the carpark, when one of the men who lived at our hall grabbed her, pulled her to the floor and held her down hard trying to take her clothes off and rape her... He continued to live at the hall for the rest of the year and she lived in fear that he would rape her.

- Anonymous respondent #37

Finally some action came about and there were safety practices put in place so that the perpetrator couldn't be in the kitchen at the same time as me. However these were 'inconvenient' for him, so the Head of Hall changed them without informing me. He would purposely cook as close to me as possible in the kitchen and attempt to intimidate me. He even wrote a note about how I was lying and put it on his door so that it spread among the community.

- Anonymous respondent #39

I heard about a guy in my year assaulting girls. The following year he was given a leadership position.

- Anonymous respondent #45

I was seen as a “safe” person to disclose to around the college, and ended up hearing a dozen or so disclosures in the space of a year. The Dean was sympathetic when I came to her with concerns, but she said there wasn’t anything she could do unless victim survivors disclosed to her. This meant that offenders were allowed to keep their place at college, which often included student representative roles. I remember walking into the dining room towards the end of semester two and just seeing offenders sitting at every table. It constantly felt like I was fighting a losing battle.

- Anonymous respondent #49

Survey Responses - Impacts of Violence and Harm

Warning: This section includes excerpts from responses to the #IDeserveSafety Survey. These excerpts describe sexual violence, suicide and self-harm, mental ill-health, trauma and institutional betrayal.

As part of the #IDeserveSafety Survey, The STOP Campaign asked people across the country who have lived through violence and harm on university campuses what impact this had on them. We asked:

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

Sexual violence has significant and lifelong flow-on effects for victim-survivors. Feelings of shame, guilt and lowered self-esteem can all arise from trauma and be long-lasting. After experiencing sexual violence, victim-survivors can face trust issues whether this be in future relationships, institutions or general distrust in the people around them. Furthermore, due to stigmatisation, victim-survivors can fear judgement from their peers, which contributes to further feelings of shame and low self-esteem.

The STOP Campaign chose to include the question above concerning the impacts and flow-on effects of sexual violence as a result of our conversations with key decision-makers working in this space. Conversations with key stakeholders have revealed a lack of comprehensive understanding surrounding the impacts of sexual violence, particularly in university settings and on-campus residences. We asked respondents to reflect on this because responses to sexual violence should not only focus on mitigating the harm in the first place, but also adequately supporting victim-survivors who have experienced it. Furthermore, the significant impacts of sexual violence can go beyond the victim-survivor and extend to others, such as family, friends and, for those in on-campus settings, pastoral care teams.

We have drawn out **5** key themes on impacts and flow-on effects of people's experiences, which are discussed further below. These impacts demonstrate people's experiences after an incident and how this has and continues to affect their higher education journey. The 5 key themes are:

1. Academic impact

2. Mental health impact
3. Social impact
4. Fear of running into perpetrator
5. Institutional mistrust

The following section of this submission includes specific responses from the Survey to illustrate each of the key themes related to the impacts of violence and harm on respondents.

Impacts of Violence and Harm

Any experience of violence and harm, including experiences of sexual violence, can have lasting impacts on a person's life, outside of the immediate physical impacts of that harm. When people experience trauma, they can experience a range of negative mental health impacts. These impacts often follow through to other aspects of the victim-survivors life including their social life, work life and, in the context of universities, their academic life. Victim-survivors also have to contend with the fact that their perpetrators commonly don't receive any consequences and they face the prospect of seeing their perpetrator on a regular basis either in their accommodation, in their classes or around campus. This prospect is often the result of failings within university responses to sexual violence. Such a response can also lead to feelings of institutional betrayal and a lack of faith in institutions.

Multiple respondents detailed that they now live with mental health impacts, such as PTSD, anxiety, depression, suicide attempts, disordered eating and panic attacks as a result of their experiences. Many respondents also noted they were unable to go to class or attend campus in general due to fear of running into their perpetrator. Some were also forced to continue living in the same accommodation as their perpetrator, constantly living in a state of fear. Socially, victim-survivors often chose to not engage in social events as they felt unsafe. Some respondents also noted the destruction of past relationships and difficulty creating new relationships as a result of their experience of violence and harm.

These Survey responses illuminate the prevalence of institutional betrayal and inadequacy of university responses to sexual violence and harm. The impacts of sexual violence do not disappear after someone leaves university - they extend beyond university and are lifelong. We are calling on universities to recognise these impacts and take steps to understand them for the purposes of mitigating further harm and holding institutions accountable for the unnecessary

harm they can cause. Victim-survivors should feel supported by their university rather than being treated as though they are the problem.

Academic Impact

Survey responses highlight the profound and extensive impact of sexual violence on individuals' academic pursuits at universities. Difficulties attending classes or completing assessments compounded to a point where many victim-survivors failed their subjects and some were ultimately forced to withdraw from their studies.

I had a nervous breakdown, I withdrew from university (HD average).

- Anonymous respondent #5

Despite providing detailed information about my campus schedule to avoid any unwanted encounters, there were occasions when our paths crossed, triggering severe anxiety and panic. One such encounter, during a critical period of hands-on work, rendered me incapacitated due to my emotional state. I was unable to perform the complex, time sensitive procedures that I had spent months working towards.

- Anonymous respondent #8

I failed my entire second year of university, which I did receive a five year academic ban from ANU because of this.

- Anonymous respondent #10

I withdrew socially after I was assaulted, and struggled to scrape through my final year of university. I ended up deferring my Honours and not going back to university (ANU specifically) because I couldn't deal with walking around places where I knew I might see my perpetrators, or be reminded of them.

- Anonymous respondent #25

I failed my second semester of university and I was required to redo many of my courses. When I went to a university counsellor, I was not listened to or offered any support. I do not associate my university experience with positivity as a result.

- Anonymous respondent #28

I did really poorly in university for a year, had major sleeping problems and didn't want to leave my room. I lived on the same floor as my perpetrator. I had to see him in so many shared spaces at the hall and elsewhere on campus.

- Anonymous respondent #29

I started to finalise plans to drop out of university.

- Anonymous respondent #33

I had panic attacks before class because I knew he was in there. I lost 10% of my class participation mark because I didn't tell the course convener why I didn't go to class.

- Anonymous respondent #34

I've barely made it through any tutorials. I can no longer participate in my classes, which isn't like me. I'm isolated and have to hide in a building I feel safe in between classes. I can't do something as basic as going to the library. That's the cost of being unsafe on campus, of facing the reality that your rapist could be around any corner.

- Anonymous respondent #51

I had to drop my complaint because the process was that inaccessible: universities in general are not disability-friendly, and they're even more inaccessible towards autistic victim-survivors. I had to drop out of my course. I had to stop working. What other choice did I have?

- Anonymous respondent #30

Mental Health Impact

Experiences of sexual violence and its' aftermath often have harmful mental health impacts including anxiety, depression, disordered eating, PTSD, suicide attempts and hospitalisation. Several respondents experienced these harmful impacts as a result of the violence and harm they faced.

I had a nervous breakdown... I had to stop working and spent several months hospitalised. I had PTSD and ruminating thought disorder related to this issue. I have managed to slowly get over it through therapy and time- but every time a story comes up in the news I am triggered. I feel compelled to share though, I want the government to take this seriously.

- Anonymous respondent #5

I had already decided to leave ANU and my on campus accommodation because of my experiences of sexual and domestic violence. My mental and emotional health was severely deteriorating, and I developed PTSD and C-PTSD from my experiences.

- Anonymous respondent #10

I started having panic attacks at university last semester as a consequence. This semester, I haven't gone a single week without at least one severe panic attack at university. My heart starts racing the moment I step foot onto campus. The panic attacks last 2+ hours, and I've never had one elsewhere. I now have to medicate myself with Valium and propranolol just to try to attend classes, but I've barely made it through any tutorials. I can no longer participate in my classes, which isn't like me.

- Anonymous respondent #51

I identify as living with PTSD from this experience.

- Anonymous respondent #28

For the next month I lived with my assaulter, while I experienced daily panic attacks and an overall dramatic decline in my mental health... due to my poor mental health I dropped the case against [the perpetrator].

- Anonymous respondent #33

I am now diagnosed with PTSD and do not enjoy my daily life within my college environment because of it.

- Anonymous respondent #36

I was traumatised by the experience of having to share in front of the entire leadership team and felt unsafe because I didn't think the Head of Hall was keeping me safe. I was highly anxious and had to seek counselling.

- Anonymous respondent #39

After I experienced sexual assault, it triggered PTSD, MDD [major depressive disorder] and disordered eating. To say it affected my ability to make and maintain relationships would be an understatement. When I would drive to campus, I would experience panic attacks and have to

pull over multiple times. I spent years in therapy, paid for diagnoses of PTSD and MDD, and underwent different therapy mechanisms like CBT. I don't even want to think about how much it cost, on top of the cost of studying from a distance, as I moved off campus after the assault.

- Anonymous respondent #44 (phone call)

A couple years later I bumped into him [the perpetrator] at McDonalds and had a panic attack.

- Anonymous respondent #47

In the first six months of leaving college, I was admitted to the psychiatric ward for severe anxiety and depression, caused partially by my vicarious trauma. I was admitted again in the 6 months following the NSSS [National Student Safety Survey]. I'm worried that I'm never going to leave this behind. I couldn't go to my graduation because I couldn't stand to walk on the stage and pretend everything was alright.

- Anonymous respondent #49

Social Impact

The ways in which people who are receiving a disclosure respond to the person disclosing to them can be crucial in the recovery of a victim-survivor. In participants' experiences where such responses were negative, this was ultimately harmful to their wellbeing. Additionally, some also felt as though their experience of sexual violence and choice to disclose compromised future relationships and engagement in social situations.

When I realised what had happened to me, I talked to my friend about it and received a very unsupportive response from her. This really hindered my recovery and destroyed our friendship. While this isn't directly related to the residential hall, I do believe that education around this topic would be beneficial, especially considering the prevalence of these kinds of assaults.

- Anonymous respondent #18

[My experience] made me nervous towards the people involved and made it incredibly difficult and uncomfortable seeing them. It ended a friendship and affects future relationships.

- Anonymous respondent #9

I didn't participate in any parties that involved residences [or] drinking.

- Anonymous respondent #26.

My life, my confidence, my relationships, my health, will never be the same...I withdrew socially after I was assaulted...I have struggled with sexual experiences and forming meaningful and open romantic connections.

- Anonymous respondent #25

I lost many friends as we had a lot of mutual friends and they didn't see the issue in it and claimed I was 'overreacting' when I said it was assault.

- Anonymous respondent #42

Fear of Running into Perpetrator

When institutions fail to respond to sexual violence in a way that promotes accountability for perpetrators and ensures the safety of victim-survivors, this can create a constant fear of encountering perpetrators. Victim-survivors living in residential halls or student accommodation often had to live with their perpetrator, go to class with their perpetrator and see them around campus. Indeed, running into one's perpetrator often triggered anxiety or panic attacks, interfering with a victim-survivor's daily life.

My good friend was sexually assaulted in our first year by one of our friends. We had to continue seeing him living on campus, being moved from college to college for repeatedly assaulting women.

- Anonymous respondent #3

I see this man on campus quite often and even in other places around Canberra. Every single time I see him I am reminded of it. I don't feel safe going to parties anymore, so I don't. It makes me disgusted because, whilst I knew that there were men who don't take no as an acceptable answer, I'd never experienced it first hand before.

- Anonymous respondent #13

I ended up deferring my Honours and not going back to university (ANU specifically) because I couldn't deal with walking around places where I knew I might see my perpetrators, or be reminded of them.

- Anonymous respondent #25

When I lived on campus there were countless times where survivors of a sexual violence incident which had been perpetrated against them at a residential hall had to continue to co-exist with the perpetrator for up to 6 months.

- Anonymous respondent #4

The non-response of staff that night harmed me. It exacerbated my trauma, and meant the perpetrator was able to find me the next day and harass and intimidate me.

- Anonymous respondent #51

I had panic attacks before class because I knew he was in there.

- Anonymous respondent #34

This made it very difficult for people to continue feeling comfortable at college, especially as we were living in such close proximity to them. Due to this rule, some people had to remain on the same floor as those accused because they were unable to be moved and there were no spare rooms available due to colleges underestimating the influx of students in 2022.

- Anonymous respondent #43

Institutional Mistrust

Institutions are meant to protect people. However, it was evident that university settings often left students feeling unsafe and unable to seek help from their residential hall or university leaders. Some spoke on this being due to past behaviour resulting in an insidious mistrust in these institutions. In many instances, the institutional betrayal victim-survivors experienced extended on to other systems, such as policing, legal systems, governments and workplaces.

I do not trust many authority figures within the colleges due to these events. If another [event] happens I would rather go to the police as the university tends to keep things hush hush.

- Anonymous respondent #23

Many of my friends... developed a fundamental mistrust of the university and residential admin features that were DESIGNED to protect us but instead facilitated more harm.

- Anonymous respondent #4

The way that the university treats its students is disgusting. I personally handed in my resignation and did not attend my graduation. It left a sour taste in my mouth and ever since I have dedicated my time to stay involved in advocating for university accountability on this issue.

- Anonymous respondent #48

#IDeserveSafety Survey Conclusion

We received responses from 52 individuals located across the country, capturing a diverse range of experiences and contexts. Their experiences of sexual violence, harm and institutional betrayal must not be understated. It became clear from the Survey results that, although sexual violence is a complex issue, similar narratives interwove through the victim-survivors' stories. The similarities in experiences highlight that most harms experienced by the respondents were devastatingly preventable, whether this be the act of violence itself or the responses to it. Appropriate education around ethical sex and consent, as well as a comprehensive top-down cultural shift, can prevent instances of sexual violence from occurring in the first place.

In addition to this, it is imperative to ensure that staff and the general community have access to trauma-informed education, resources and training to ensure that individual and institutional responses to sexual violence are as survivor-centred as possible. There must be changes to institutional responses in a way that incorporates the lived experiences and expertise of victim-survivors and their communities. The individuals who participated in this Survey represent a small portion of the countless people who have experienced sexual violence in a university context and of the millions of people who have experienced sexual violence at any time in their lives.

For far too long, decisions have been made by people with little actual knowledge of the lifelong impacts of sexual violence. This must change and the voices of victim-survivors need to be listened to.

Case Study: The Australian National University

I ended up having to move out of my residential hall in the middle of the semester because I could not afford to have my parents involved. I attempted to end my life again and was hospitalised again. I was lucky enough to find a psychologist who has helped me get through all that and graduate. I ended up graduating a few years later than I planned and the hardest part of all was seeing the person who assaulted me get elected as a student representative with ANUSA [ANU Students' Association], graduate and get a fancy job while I was struggling with basic daily tasks trying to keep myself alive.

- Anonymous respondent #19

The Australian National University (ANU) is a useful case study to examine sexual violence in residential hall communities due to its large proportion of on-campus residents. The ANU has fifteen student residences and four Unilodges, which house approximately 5,700 students.²⁵ The vast majority of these students are undergraduates (aged approximately 17-25 years) and many are in their first year of university. The ANU also has a 'first-year guarantee' for first year students to be placed in accommodation upon entering the university, meaning that some are housed in Unilodges at the University of Canberra, the Canberra Accommodation Centre, or Hostels temporarily while waiting for a room on ANU campus to become available.

The ANU has also been identified as having the highest rates of sexual violence of all Australian universities.²⁶ Indeed, The STOP Campaign was founded at the ANU as a direct response to the disproportionate rates of sexual violence occurring in on-campus residential halls. The majority of The STOP Campaign's members are ANU students or alumni who have lived on campus themselves, giving us a wealth of information and experience related to its residential hall communities and policies.

While the ANU has received significant media attention on the subject of student safety and wellbeing, it is certainly not the only Australian university displaying unacceptable rates of on-campus sexual violence. The purpose of this case study is to discuss specific examples of

²⁵ Australian National University. (n.d.). *Residential experience*.
<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/residential-experience>

²⁶ Heywood, W., Myers, P., Powell, A., Meikle, G., & Nguyen, D. (2022). *National Student Safety Survey: Report on the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault among university students in 2021*. The Social Research Centre.
<https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2021-NSSS-National-Report.pdf>

inadequate institutional responses to sexual violence, to inform our recommendations for all Australian universities to more safely and effectively prevent violence and harm and improve institutional responses to such harm. The ANU is one university, but the experiences of staff and students there is representative of the broader situation across Australian tertiary education institutions.

Sexual Violence at the ANU

Approximately 1 in 8 ANU students who participated in the NSSS reported having been sexually assaulted during their time at university. This is three times the national average.²⁷

Approximately 1 in 3 ANU students reported having experienced sexual harassment during their time at university, which is twice the national average.²⁸ In both the Change the Course report and NSSS, the ANU was found to have the highest rates of sexual harassment and second highest rates of sexual assault out of the 39 Australian universities that were surveyed.²⁹

The ANU's very own Code of Conduct imposes that it is the university's responsibility to "protect the health and welfare of its people by providing an environment which is safe and free from discrimination and harassment".³⁰ It is evident, however, that this standard has not been upheld.

One quarter of respondents to our #IDeserveSafety Survey explicitly disclosed experiences of violence and harm within or connected to the ANU. The responses indicate that sexual assault and harassment, physical violence, stalking, spiking, and suicide and self-harm remain prevalent within ANU residential halls.

²⁷ Heywood, W., Myers, P., Powell, A., Meikle, G., & Nguyen, D. (2022). *National Student Safety Survey: Report on the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault among university students in 2021*. The Social Research Centre.

<https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2021-NSSS-National-Report.pdf>

²⁸ Heywood, W., Myers, P., Powell, A., Meikle, G., & Nguyen, D. (2022). *National Student Safety Survey: Report on the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault among university students in 2021*. The Social Research Centre.

<https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2021-NSSS-National-Report.pdf>

²⁹ Chang, C. (2017, August 2). *Survey reveals sexual assault and harassment at Australian universities*. News.com.au.

<https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/survey-reveals-sexual-assault-and-harassment-at-australian-universities/news-story/ef568dea17e888711d507d92a770259b>; McCormack, A. (2022, March 24). Which university is safest? This is how every Australian uni performed in a survey about sexual violence and harassment. *ABC News*.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-03-24/university-rankings-sexual-assault-survey/100936114>

³⁰ Australian National University. (2019, April 1). *Policy: Code of conduct*. Policy Library. https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_000388

2018 Nous Group Review

In May 2018, following the publication of the Change the Course report, the ANU commissioned the Nous Group to review factors contributing to sexual violence in its on-campus residential halls (the Nous review). The central findings of the Nous review were that (emphasis added):

*Overall, consultation indicated that both staff and students are committed to the effective prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment. However, there was a degree of **confusion about the best course of action when incidents do occur**. The Review identified a significant level **of dissatisfaction among residents and student leaders regarding recent responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment**, both within residences and at the broader university...*

*... [T]here is more the ANU can do to signal its commitment to implementing a preventative, zero-tolerance approach to sexual assault and sexual harassment. At the cultural level, opportunities for improvement relate to setting **shared expectations, offering more regular and more consistent training, and ensuring a sustainable, supportive pastoral care model**. Within responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment, our recommendations focus on establishing and improving the **consistency, transparency, and visibility of the pathways for reporting and the penalties delivered when sexual assault and sexual harassment do occur**.³¹*

The Nous review also put forward 12 recommendations which included that the ANU:

- Develop and communicate a clear, standalone policy related to administrative arrangements for on-campus sexual assault and harassment, including a formal reporting process and consequences for perpetrators (Recommendations 1, 5, 9, 12).
- Ensure that residential halls proactively provide professional support to victim-survivors of sexual violence and communicate to all residents the support and reporting options available after experiencing violence (Recommendation 4).
- Ensure that all pastoral care staff at residential halls (including Senior Residents, Residential Advisors and Community Coordinators) be appropriately trained, supervised and remunerated (Recommendation 2).
- Implement follow-up meetings between trained staff and student leaders who receive disclosures of sexual violence (Recommendation 3).

³¹ Nous Group. (2018, December 4). *Review of ANU residences' response to sexual assault and sexual harassment*. <https://imagedepot.anu.edu.au/scapa/Website/ResidentialReviewReport.pdf>

- Develop and disseminate resources relating to sexual assault and harassment which align with best practice (Recommendation 10).

In our view, the ANU has only *partially* fulfilled *some* of the 12 recommendations put forward by the Nous review. Responses to the Survey, and our own experiences as students and recent alumni of the ANU, indicate that many of these key recommendations have not been implemented to a standard that should be expected at one of Australia's most prestigious universities.

Activism on Campus

The ANU has a long history of student activism, characterised by a student sentiment that the institution must be held accountable for its actions (and inaction), and that change is sorely needed. Since the release of the Change the Course report on 1 August 2017, the ANU Students Association (ANUSA) has held an annual protest at the ANU on 1 August. The protest brings together students who are resolute in their demand for the ANU to implement the recommendations of the Change the Course report and Nous review – which remain unfulfilled. In addition to protests, students have voiced their concerns and expectations through open letters to ANU Administration, which reflect a profound disappointment with the ANU's response to sexual violence on campus. Students have called upon the ANU to prioritise the issue as a matter of utmost importance and to take immediate, decisive action.

In August 2019, ANU students protested on the same day as the ANU held its University Open Day. Students draped banners off of their balconies and chalked on the entrances to residential halls with messages such as “Do Better ANU”.³² The protest called on the ANU to be accountable to the harm and violence occurring on campus and to take this issue seriously. It had a particular focus on how the ANU was failing (and continues to fail) students and student leaders in residential halls.

³² Roy, T. (2019). ANU slammed for letting ‘bureaucracy’ get in the way of its sexual violence prevention strategy. *ABC News*. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-01/anu-sexual-assault-prevention-strategy-still-in-draft-form/11372004>; Skyring, R., Ward, C., & Sixsmith, G. (2019). Do better ANU: Open day strike a wrap-up. *Woroni*. <https://www.woroni.com.au/news/do-better-anu-open-day-strike-a-wrap-up-2/>; The STOP Campaign. (2019, September 18). *Celebrating activism: Do better ANU* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GctwfHMrJos>

In March 2022, following the release of the NSSF, ANU alumni penned an open letter to the ANU leadership - the ANU Council and ANU University Executive - to make meaningful and urgent action to end sexual violence at the ANU.³³ Key issues penned in the statement include:

- Student safety plans that appear to be rushed out, without substantive consultation.
- Commitments to funding without a strategy that spans prevention, intervention and response to sexual violence.
- Having no dedicated, independent governance body responsible for action and accountability on this issue is a poor reflection on the University.

The STOP Campaign was born out of the ANU's poor responses to sexual violence. Since its inception, however, the ANU has failed to meaningfully acknowledge or embrace our activism against sexual violence and advocacy for victim-survivors who are silenced by the ANU. Members of The STOP Campaign who are victim-survivors and supporters have been made to feel disempowered, disrespected and deeply undervalued by this institution. Further, staff at residential halls have inappropriately communicated with members of The STOP Campaign when we have attempted to distribute resources and deliver evidence-informed, government-funded, peer-led education initiatives led by and to ANU students.³⁴

Failure to Develop and Communicate Clear Policies and Procedures Related to Reporting and Responding to Sexual Violence

I was told of the formal reporting process by a member of one the student wellbeing teams at the ANU. This team member said the process is as follows: I would need to write a written statement detailing what happened to me, the perpetrator then gets to read this statement in full and respond to it. However, I would not get to see or hear what the perpetrator said in response and receive an outcome approximately 12 weeks later. This is an incredibly re-traumatising process. Coupled with this and the fact that residential hall disclosure policies are all over the shop and not easily accessible, this is simply not okay.

- Anonymous respondent #40

³³ ANU Alumni for Action. (2022). *ANU alumni for action to end sexual harrassment and sexual assault*. <https://sites.google.com/view/annualumniforaction/home?authuser=0>; Lansdown, S. (2022). ANU alumni pen open letter on sexual assault and harrassment. *The Canberra Times*. <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/7680346/disgusting-survey-results-on-university-sexual-assault-harassment/>

³⁴ For further information on the barriers The STOP Campaign has faced in university communities, see section *The STOP Campaign: Our Experiences*.

The [ANU's Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) is vague and unclear.³⁵ The 16-paragraph policy statement includes various links to the ANU's pre-existing Discipline Rule, Enterprise Agreement 2017-2021, Code of Conduct and Policy Framework – it is not a single source of truth. The policy does not explain the process of formal disclosure at the university level, provide insight into the processes that follow making a disclosure, nor inform of the support services available to victim-survivors. We do not consider that students, particularly those who may have very recently experienced trauma, could be expected to navigate this policy.

One respondent labelled the formal reporting process at ANU as 're-traumatising' (Response #40). Two respondents were informed by a staff member that the reporting process involved formulating 'a written statement detailing what happened', which the perpetrator would then read before responding. The victim-survivor would not be permitted to read the perpetrator's response. An 'outcome' would then be provided to the victim-survivor approximately 12 weeks later (Response #29, Response #40). Notwithstanding our view that this reporting process is neither equitable, trauma-informed nor victim-survivor led, it is also not outlined in the ANU's Sexual Misconduct Policy. This is a fundamental failure to implement the Nous review's recommendation.

It also appears that each residential hall at the ANU has different policies for responding to disclosures of violence and dealing with alleged perpetrators – policies which also appear to be inconsistently applied. Multiple respondents indicated that because senior staff did not deem their experience to constitute sexual violence, nothing was done (despite the incidents involving clear physical violence – Response #34, Response #39). It is also unclear how and when alleged perpetrators are transferred across residential halls following a report of sexual violence. A respondent indicated their confusion, fear and frustration when perpetrators were simply moved between residences and continued to engage in sexually violent behaviour (Response #3). The inconsistency in policy and response to sexual harm underscores the urgent need for reform and a more robust approach to ensuring the safety of ANU's student community.

³⁵ Australian National University. (2022, November 29). *Policy: Sexual misconduct*. Policy Library. https://policies.anu.edu.au/pp/document/ANUP_6059194.

Failure to Provide Professional Support to Victim-Survivors of Violence and Student Leaders After Disclosures

The perpetrator had also sexually assaulted other members of the college. When I went forward to the Head of Hall, nothing was done. I also did not go forward to the Head of Hall about sexual assault by a member of a different college, as she was friends with [the Head of Hall] on Facebook. Given my previous experience I didn't think anything would be done, and I was worried about it getting back to him. I now work in the community sector and was doing a course where a current staff member in a wellbeing area at the ANU spoke about colluding with perpetrators of sexual assault and how they felt sorry for [perpetrators]. This indicates to me there are multiple levels of staffing in the ANU where it would not be safe to go to.

- Anonymous respondent #24

It is clear from the responses to the Survey that senior staff at the ANU rarely provide sensitive, supportive and trauma-informed responses to disclosures of sexual violence in residential halls. Multiple respondents indicated that senior staff did nothing after receiving a report of violence – either by explicitly refusing to escalate the report due to reputation concerns (Response #5) or failing to follow up with the person who disclosed (Response #1, Response #39). This is a direct failure to implement Recommendation 3 of the Nous review, which emphasised the importance of following up a disclosure. We are also alarmed by the reports that staff members in sexual violence response and student wellbeing positions at the ANU did not appropriately respond to disclosures of sexual violence occurring on-campus (Response #6, Response #34). As one respondent noted (Response #10):

I felt unheard, invalidated and as though I was a nuisance from the one attempt I made to report one of my experiences of harassment and assault.

In other circumstances, staff members in sexual violence response and student wellbeing positions at the ANU didn't follow up with people who reported at all. As one respondent noted (Respondent #25):

I filled out an ANU form to report my sexual assault within 6 months of the incident. I never heard back from the ANU, and this stuck with me. I felt like the ANU didn't care, and that they had presented a service that they couldn't even run effectively.

Ultimately, these poor responses of senior staff at the ANU are a shared experience of many victim-survivors. This has created a culture where victim-survivors and community members choose not to disclose sexual violence in residential halls (Response #24).

Failure to Ensure Pastoral Care Staff are Adequately Trained and Supported

There have been many instances (3) where I have been sexually assaulted on campus. For instance, once I had someone grab me and try to drag me into his room. He was drunk and had been trying to make advances at me all night and I kept saying no. I had to pull my arm away and literally run in the opposite direction. He grabbed my arm so hard that it bruised. I brought it up to one of the student wellbeing teams at the ANU, who told me it doesn't count as assault. I refused to report anything after that.

- Anonymous respondent #34

Despite the alarming rates of sexual violence, suicide and self-harm at ANU residential colleges, the brunt of crisis pastoral care work is carried out by students in Senior Resident, Residential Advisors and Community Coordinator positions (most of whom are aged 18-25). There continues to be a severe lack of training for these students to navigate the complexities of on-campus violence and harm (Response #1). Indeed, members of The STOP Campaign who have recently held pastoral care responsibilities at the ANU did not receive specific training on responding to disclosures of sexual violence from victim-survivors or alleged perpetrators.

We note also that several respondents also explained that alleged perpetrators had been promoted to student leadership and/or pastoral care roles at the ANU following disclosures of sexual and physical violence (Responses #2, #6, #19, #25, #37).

In general, the pastoral care support systems at ANU residential halls are unsafe and unsustainable. For example, students in Community Coordinator roles at some of the residences (most of whom are aged from 20-25 years) have been tasked with coordinating the effective functioning of pastoral care teams and acting as a first responder in crises. Community Coordinators are also employed with casual contracts and paid on the basis of a capped number of hours to be worked each week. This capped number of hours grossly underestimates the actual work hours of students in these positions, rendering their remuneration

under-representative of the hours they are realistically working and unfair. As a result, the Community Coordinator position is unsustainable for students, both financially and in terms of safety and wellbeing. The ANU re-introduced the 'Wellbeing Officer' role (a paid professional staff position) to residential halls in 2022, a few days before the release of the damning results of the NSSS.

Failing to train and support students in pastoral care positions to respond safely to disclosures of sexual violence, or to provide in-depth post-disclosure support to mitigate the risk of vicarious trauma and/or re-traumatisation, not only poses an unacceptable risk to the health and wellbeing of victim-survivors of sexual violence but also to those students in pastoral care positions.

Failure to Provide Information, Educational Materials and Resources on Sexual Violence that Align with Best Practice

For immigrant or minority students [sexual violence] was at a higher and often unreported rate. A lot of people I have met or friends I have who have personally disclosed to me during my time at the ANU often didn't feel safe to escalate, didn't know how to, or would feel extremely discouraged by the process of seeking help and support.

- Anonymous respondent #1

We have identified that there is very limited information available to students at the ANU about their options for reporting and accessing support after experiencing sexual violence, and that the information that is available fails to engage or equip students with the necessary skills to prevent sexual violence in their communities.

We acknowledge that some residential halls at the ANU display flyers from the Respectful Relationships Unit (the team responsible for the prevention of sexual violence on campus) which provide a brief overview of ANU's Sexual Misconduct Policy. However, as discussed above, the policy is not a useful resource for students in its current form. Further, it is important that students are informed of their options after experiencing sexual violence (including for accessing personal, legal and/or medical support) - options that extend further than reporting to the university.

ANU residential halls also host one in-person session for students in the first week of the university semester ('O-Week') on consent and respectful relationships, often held as a precursor to a social event involving alcohol. However, we are concerned that this is a mere 'box ticking' exercise that fails to actually empower students with the knowledge and tools to prevent sexual violence and promote ethical sex and wellbeing in their own communities. As one respondent noted (Response #18):

It took me a long time to see [my experience] as an assault because attitudes around drunk sex are generally that [non-consensual drunk sex] is acceptable. We did not receive adequate information about the complexities of alcohol and consent. When I first moved into my residential hall at ANU last year, the most alcohol consent training we got was along the lines of, 'it's going to happen so just make sure you're not too drunk and you stay with your friends'. This is not adequate.

One-off sessions in O-Week must be followed by refresher workshops throughout the year to ensure that students understand and are able to apply the content.

While we welcome the ANU's commitment to developing and facilitating primary prevention programs for students in residential halls, we are concerned that these programs (1) have not been adequately consulted with students and those with lived experience of sexual violence in the residential hall context, and (2) are not based on current, Australian evidence-informed best practice. As one respondent noted (Response #3):

We're not seeing any actual engagement with students who have lived at college about how to best address sexual violence in their own communities. We have sexual violence prevention modules developed by adults who, despite their valued expertise, haven't lived at college in years.

The development of the ANU's [Rights, Relationships and Respect](#) program (the RRR Program) involved consultation with students in December 2022 and January 2023, a period during the Summer university break in which the vast majority of residential halls on campus were closed. Further, the RRR Program appears to be based on research and practice from other countries without working to ensure these programs are well-received by the local student body.

ANU Case Study Conclusion

There exists an urgent need for independent, nation-wide reform to address and prevent violence and harm in the university context. This is underscored by the alarmingly high rates of sexual violence and harassment at the ANU, coupled with the university's failure to implement critical recommendations from the Nous review. The policies, response mechanisms and support structures developed by the ANU are inadequate and have created a culture where victim-survivors (and the entire student community at large) feel unsupported and disempowered. The unfortunate reality is that universities cannot be trusted to hold themselves accountable for sexual violence occurring on campus and continue to fail in their efforts to address the issue. This case study serves as a stark reminder that addressing sexual violence within university settings requires not merely words that tokenise a 'zero tolerance' commitment to sexual violence, but a proactive, victim-survivor led and evidence-informed approach to primary prevention and response.

Detailed Recommendations

I felt unheard, invalidated and as though I was a nuisance from the one attempt I made to report one of my experiences of harassment and assault. Whatever the recommendations, whatever changes you choose to implement, please consider how you are going to treat victim-survivors in the future, because I still hold my treatment by the university quite heavily in my heart.

- Anonymous Respondent #10

As part of the #IDeserveSafety Survey, The STOP Campaign asked people across the country who have lived through violence and harm on university campuses to provide us with their recommendations for change. We asked:

- 1. What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector?**
- 2. Do you have any recommendations on what should change?**

Individuals who have experienced harm within university communities have an unparalleled understanding of the issues surrounding harm and what needs to change. Unlike the typical consulting processes for recommendations where staff with limited experience in these environments are responsible for generating recommendations and strategies, our Survey prioritised the lived experience of individuals directly affected by violence, harm and institutional betrayal in university settings. Furthermore, these questions encouraged respondents to not only propose recommendations, but also to highlight factors that the Government and Accord Panel should take into account when shaping policy changes. By drawing on the first-hand experiences and knowledge of respondents, we pose recommendations to the Accord Panel that not only urge a transformation of university environments, but are also rooted in the real, lived experiences of those who understand the complexities and nuances of these communities.

We have also developed key recommendations based on our own experiences of violence, harm and institutional betrayal in these settings and our expertise of advocating on this issue in our own campus communities.

Recommendations for the Australian Universities Accord Panel

There needs to be consequences for universities that silence survivors.

- *Anonymous Respondent #15*

1. **Adopt this submission's recommendations** and include them in the Final Report of the Accord Process.
2. Recommend that residential halls and student accommodation, including private entities, be a **priority area for inquiry and reform** for the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments.
3. Develop and utilise an **intersectional policy framework** to guide the Accord Process. This should include guiding principles for action and the intended outcomes of the Accord Process. This framework and the actions that sit underneath must, where possible, adopt holistic **co-design, co-implementation and co-evaluation** principles with student activists, victim-survivors and university-specific sexual violence experts.
4. Establish an **expert and victim-survivor-led advisory group** to guide the implementation of reforms stemming from the Accord Panel Final Report. This **must include** experts in the field of sexual violence prevention and response in universities, and those working at the grassroots level.³⁶

Recommendations for the Australian Commonwealth Government

All of this could have been avoided if the Government just listened to us in the first place.

- *Anonymous Respondent #49*

5. Establish a **national independent inquiry** into harm and violence occurring in university residential halls and student accommodation. The inquiry must:
 - a. Address experiences of sexual violence.
 - b. Address the responses to these experiences of sexual violence.
6. Establish a **national independent body** to provide oversight and monitoring of the operation of universities and residential halls and student accommodation in relation to student welfare, inclusive of sexual violence and harm. This body must be led by experts

³⁶ This should be made of people who represent the interests of those being harmed on campus and not university representatives that have alternate agendas, such as university reputation. There should also be a transparent public EOI process so that Government officials cannot handpick people based on their personal connections to them.

on sexual violence in a university context, including individuals with lived experience of sexual violence in university contexts. This body must be empowered to:

- a. **Set and enforce national standards** for sexual violence prevention and response policies and procedures in all tertiary education spaces including:
 - i. Universities.
 - ii. TAFE institutions.
 - iii. Residential halls and student accommodation affiliated with universities.
 - iv. Privatised residential halls and student accommodation.
- b. Set and enforce **minimum standards of qualification for tertiary education staff responsible for student wellbeing**.
- c. Where appropriate, **impose sanctions** on tertiary education institutions that fail to meet the national standards (including by withholding funding).
- d. Introduce and manage a **licensing system** for student accommodation providers which requires providers to meet the national standards in order to operate at Australian tertiary institutions.
- e. Where applicable, ensure that tertiary education institutions establish **appropriate accountability mechanisms for residential halls and student accommodation**.
- f. Operate a **mechanism for complaints and appeals from victim-survivors** following a response by their tertiary education institution, residential hall and/or student accommodation provider.
- g. Publish information about its operation, powers, policies and procedures in an **accessible** and easy to read format, including in languages other than English.

Recommendations for State and Territory Governments

The government finally needs to start looking after international students in this country. We are more than the fees we pay and we deserve to be and feel safe.

- Anonymous Respondent #35

7. Ensure tertiary education institutions have **access to and disseminate information about local support services and relevant legal and policy frameworks** related to sexual violence and harm (for both domestic and international students)
8. Where appropriate, work with the Commonwealth Government to **impose sanctions** on tertiary education institutions and/or student accommodation providers that fail to meet

the national standards and ensure that tertiary education institutions establish **appropriate accountability mechanisms for residential halls and student accommodation** (see recommendation 6).

Recommendations for Universities and Tertiary Education Institutions

A lot of people I have met or friends I have who have personally disclosed to me ... often didn't feel safe to escalate, or didn't know how to or would feel extremely discouraged by the process of seeking help and support. I also felt while I was [at university] ... that sexual and consent driven education wasn't very well received or was quite impersonal for the broader student body.

- Anonymous respondent #1

9. Develop, publish and communicate **clear and accessible processes for disclosing and reporting sexual violence** in tertiary education settings. These processes must be easily accessible for all students and explain the:
 - a. Process of reporting sexual violence to the university and what information and involvement will be required of the victim-survivor throughout the process.
 - b. Possible outcomes of a report to the university, including the circumstances in which a report (or the circumstances surrounding the report) is escalated to other services (including police) and outcomes for the alleged perpetrator.
 - c. Options for remaining anonymous and how this may impact on the possible outcomes of a disclosure or report.
 - d. Supports and accommodations available to the victim-survivor to ensure their safety and wellbeing.
 - e. Links to the relevant reporting policies of residential halls and student accommodation providers, and an explanation of how those reporting policies supplement and sit within the university-wide reporting policy.
10. **Ensure that reporting processes** are survivor-centred, trauma-informed and align with the national standards set by the independent body (see recommendation 6). These reporting processes must:
 - a. Be conducted in a timely manner so as to not further traumatise the victim-survivor.
 - b. Ensure that every report is treated with the same level of gravity and attention.
 - c. Provide regular updates to the victim-survivor on the status of their report (regardless of whether progress has been made).

- d. Immediately provide the victim-survivor with support services and other resources including information about relevant grassroots organisations who provide options for support and advocacy pathways (not only university-affiliated support options).
 - e. Include a debrief or check-in option with the victim-survivor at the conclusion of the reporting process, as an opportunity to provide any further support and seek feedback on the process.
11. Develop and enforce **accountability mechanisms for staff who perpetrate** acts of sexual violence, including immediate suspension where appropriate. This must include provisions to ensure the safety of the victim-survivor and to protect them from further victimisation or retaliation.
 12. Ensure that all prevention and response policies are developed through **genuine consultation using co-design principles** with students,³⁷ victim-survivors, advocates and subject-matter experts.
 13. Provide a mechanism in which **feedback and/or complaints** related to university policy and procedures can be given by individuals and groups **without punishment, repercussion or restriction**.
 14. Ensure **educational materials on sexual violence** are easily available in university public spaces, residential halls and online. These materials must:
 - a. Be evidence-informed and trauma-informed.
 - b. Be written in clear and easy to understand language, including languages other than English.
 - c. Include information on all support services available to victim-survivors and their supporters (both locally and nationally), including avenues for advocacy and activism.³⁸
 - d. Be culturally appropriate and inclusive to **ensure accessibility for international students** and other diverse communities.

³⁷ The STOP Campaign considers that listening to the voices of students is an essential part of university accountability and change. To this end, we echo the submission of the National Union of Students, particularly their recommendation to establish a Student Voice on Student experience: National Union of Students. (2023, July 7). *Duty of care model for the higher education sector: Submission for the Accords Panel*.

<https://www.education.gov.au/australian-universities-accord/consultations/consultation-accord-discussion-paper/submission/16672>

³⁸ See, for example, the “Safe Response Toolkit” created by The STOP Campaign which includes information on all support services available in the ACT <https://www.saferesponsetoolkit.com.au/>.

15. Provide **ongoing mandatory training** for all staff and student leaders on sexual violence prevention and response. This training must be:
 - a. Peer-led where appropriate.
 - b. In-person where possible.
 - c. Trauma-informed.
 - d. Evidence-informed.
 - e. Intersectional.
16. Integrate **information about sexual violence prevention and response** into the university curriculum, including information on activism and advocacy opportunities available to students to support prevention efforts on campus.
17. Increase **funding for university safety and wellbeing support** services. This includes:
 - a. Staff resourcing and development across key residential, support and education teams.
 - b. Student services, including those that are delivered by students themselves.
 - c. Medical and psychosocial support.
 - d. Academic support.
18. Release annual reports on sexual violence prevalence, prevention and response efforts to **ensure transparency and accountability**. These reports should include:
 - a. The number of disclosures of sexual violence and related harm received by staff at the university and student accommodation providers.
 - b. The number of formal reports made to the university and student accommodation providers.
 - c. The number of different outcomes of those reports to the university and student accommodation.
19. Provide **alternative academic pathways for victim-survivors**, which may include allowances in their academic schedules and conditions to allow them to appropriately cope with their trauma whilst not compromising their education experience. The accessibility of these pathways must not place an unnecessary burden on the victim-survivor to demonstrate their trauma.
20. **Remunerate and appropriately credit grassroots organisations** where their expertise and resources are referred to in developing processes, policies and/or educational materials for sexual violence prevention and response.

Recommendations for Residential Halls and Student Accommodation Providers

Responses to sexual violence need to prioritise the victim at all times, with the first priority being to keep them safe mentally and physically. Residential halls still don't have the capability to respond effectively. I wish that I didn't tell anyone about my experience because it was actually more traumatising to deal with my hall than the incident itself.

- Anonymous respondent #39

21. Develop, publish and communicate **clear and accessible processes for disclosing and reporting sexual violence** to the student accommodation provider. This reporting process must be easily accessible for all students and explain the:
 - a. Process of reporting sexual violence to the residential hall and what information and involvement will be required of the victim-survivor throughout the process.
 - b. Possible outcomes of a report, including the circumstances in which a report (or the circumstances surrounding the report) is escalated (including to the university and/or police) and outcomes for the alleged perpetrator.
 - c. Options for remaining anonymous and how this may impact on the possible outcomes of a disclosure or report.
 - d. Supports and accommodations available to the victim-survivor to ensure their safety and wellbeing in the residential hall.
 - e. Links to the relevant reporting policies of the university/tertiary education provider and an explanation of how the reporting process sits within the university-wide reporting policy.
22. Develop and communicate **complaints procedures** for residents of halls and student accommodation **on staff behaviour** and responses to disclosures of student harm.
23. Provide **ongoing training for all residents** living in a residential hall or student accommodation setting on sexual violence prevention and response.³⁹
 - a. Training must address the following topics:
 - i. Responding to disclosures of sexual violence by both victim-survivors and perpetrators, including understanding vicarious trauma and re-traumatisation.

³⁹ The STOP Campaign has created a series of educational modules for residents living in residential halls and student accommodation settings: <https://www.thestopcampaign.org.au/college-program>.

- ii. Being an upstander and the importance of community-building in enacting positive sociocultural change.
 - iii. Sexual wellbeing, including ethical sex and consent.
 - iv. The legal framework of consent and sexual violence in the relevant State or Territory.
- b. Training must be:
- i. Mandatory for all students (except in circumstances where a student who has experienced harm wishes to opt-out).
 - ii. Peer-led where possible.
 - iii. In-person where possible.
 - iv. Trauma-informed.
 - v. Evidence-informed.
 - vi. Intersectional.
 - vii. Culturally appropriate, inclusive and accessible.
 - viii. Supplemented by appropriate support services.
24. Establish clear co-operative **policies for engaging with external agencies**, including the police, in cases of sexual violence. These policies must be set out in the reporting process, and should be consistent for all criminal acts involving violence and harm in the student residential hall context.
25. Increase the **security of residential halls and student accommodation** buildings to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and to prevent instances of theft, stalking and other criminal behaviours by non-residents. Ensure that all security staff are appropriately trained and do not pose a safety threat to students (for example, by having access to individual rooms).

These recommendations collectively emphasise the importance of a holistic approach to addressing sexual violence within university residential halls, incorporating education, training, support, transparency and cultural change to create safer and more inclusive environments for all students.

Conclusion

To effectively understand and respond to sexual violence and harm on university campuses, a deeper understanding of the multifaceted impacts of sexual violence and a comprehensive approach to prevention is essential. This is only possible through engagement with the lived experiences of victim-survivors of sexual violence and other forms of harm in the university context. We call on the Accord Panel to acknowledge and address these crucial gaps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of university communities across Australia, inclusive of residential halls and student accommodation.

The STOP Campaign is committed to working collaboratively with the Accord Panel and the Australian Government to address these issues and foster meaningful change on university campuses. We firmly believe that our collective effort, centred on trauma-informed and equitable consultation and student input, will pave the way for safer and more inclusive learning environments that are free from violence and harm.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Copy of our #IDeserveSafety Survey

#IDeserveSafety Survey

The STOP Campaign wants to hear your experiences of violence and harm in university residential halls and on-campus accommodation settings, as part of our [#IDeserveSafety](#) campaign.

We are collecting experiences to inform our submission to the Australian Universities Accord panel.

The survey is **anonymous** and is open to **anyone** who has an experience to share.

This survey will close on 1 September 2023 at 11:59pm.

Who are we?

The STOP Campaign is a grassroots organisation made up of university students and alumni who are passionate about ending sexual violence in universities. Through gathering the lived experiences of our members and the broader community, The STOP Campaign has identified that sexual violence continues to occur in residential halls. It is critical that this issue is in focus as universities work to improve their prevention and response practices.

What is this survey about?

This survey is for **anyone** who would like to share their experiences of harm in a university residential hall or on-campus accommodation setting. This could include:

- Any form of sexual violence, domestic violence, suicide and/or a critical incident in a residential hall or on-campus accommodation setting.
- The impacts and flow on effects that these experiences have had for you personally and/or others involved.
- How the residential hall and/or university dealt with these circumstances and how that affected the people involved.

- How accessible and/or identifiable report and support options are and if you had reported, what was your experience of this
- Reflections and/or recommendations for change as a result of your experiences
- Any other matters you would like to share on these issues.

This survey is **anonymous**.

What will the results of this survey be used for?

Information collected in this survey will form part of a submission to the Australian Government, as part of the Australian University Accord process. The submission will be drafted by The STOP Campaign. **The submission will be released publicly, but all information will be anonymous and de-identified.**

The [Australian University Accord process](#) was announced in 2022. It is a 12-month review of Australia's higher education system and is led by a panel of Australian experts. Sexual violence on university campuses is one aspect of the review. The final Report will be released in **December 2023**.

If you do not wish for your responses to be included in The STOP Campaign's submission, please select 'No' to Question 1.

We want to support you to be able to share your experiences in your own way and on your own terms.

To support your decision making about completing this survey, we have developed a [Frequently Asked Questions Factsheet](#).

****Note from The STOP Campaign****

Responding to this survey may be distressing and re-traumatising. We encourage you to share as much as you feel safe and comfortable sharing and to prioritise your health and wellbeing. We also encourage you to reach out for support if you would like it, from a trusted person or a professional. You can also access the services below.

We believe you and we stand with you.

Support is available 24/7 at:

- 1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732
- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- 13YARN: 13 92 76

More national resources for support can be found here:

<https://www.saferesponsetoolkit.com.au/national-support-services>

More specific sexual violence support services in each jurisdiction can be found here:

<https://www.nasasv.org.au/support-directory>

* Indicates required question

Do you consent to The STOP Campaign including your responses to this survey in our submission to the University Accord panel? We will only share information that is anonymous and de-identified. Please note that if your responses are included in the public submission, it may be reported by the media. (If you consent partly, please tick “Other” and specify)*

- Yes
- No
- Other:

Do you consent to The STOP Campaign sharing any information you provide in this survey privately with the University Accord panel (not in the public submission)? We will only ever share information if it is anonymous and de-identified. If you choose yes, your response will not appear in the public submission, which will hopefully help inform the outcomes of the University Accord panel. (If you consent partly, please tick “Other” and specify)*

- Yes
- No
- Other:

Do you consent to The STOP Campaign sharing any information you provide in this survey with politicians or other stakeholders to help inform their policies and decision making? We will only share information that is anonymous and de-identified. (If you consent partly, please tick “Other” and specify)*

- Yes
- No
- Other:

Do you consent to The STOP Campaign sharing any information you provide in this survey with the public (for example, in resource/social media)? We will only share information that is anonymous and de-identified. (If you consent partly, please tick “Other” and specify)*

- Yes
- No
- Other:

Do you consent to The STOP Campaign including the university, college and/or on-campus accommodation when sharing the information you provide us? When doing so, we would only share this information with respect to what you have consented to in the questions above, and if it is safe and appropriate for us to do so. (If you consent partly, please tick “Other” and specify)*

- Yes
- No
- Other:

Anyone can contribute information regardless of whether they are currently connected to a college or not. However to help us gather data, **please tick any that apply to you, either now or in the past.***

- Student
- Resident at a Residential Hall or on-campus accommodation
- Student Leader
- Alumni
- Staff
- Faculty
- Family Member
- Visitor

- Organisation representatives
- Counsellor
- Contractor
- Emergency service personnel
- I'd prefer not to say
- Other:

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know? (We suggest writing your answer in a document and copy-pasting into here in case the survey times out)

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved? (We suggest writing your answer in a document and copy-pasting into here in case the survey times out)

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change? (We suggest writing your answer in a document and copy-pasting into here in case the survey times out)

Would you feel at risk sharing your experiences if it weren't anonymous?*

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Are you interested in talking with Camille Schloeffel or Audrey Mims to discuss this further? If yes, please indicate your first name or a pseudonym, your phone number, and any days or times that work best for you (if you know right now) and one of us will contact you for a confidential phone call.

Would you be interested in hearing updates from us about the project? If yes, please provide your email and/or phone number.

Would you be interested in speaking to media if the opportunity were to become available? Please note we will never hand out your contact information to anyone in the media. Ticking yes, alerts us that you are interested in media opportunities, and we may contact you in future to discuss any opportunities which might arise. You would be under no obligation to proceed with media.*

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above? (We suggest writing your answer in a document and copy-pasting into here in case the survey times out)

Appendix 2: Copy of our Frequently Asked Questions Factsheet

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Factsheet has been developed to assist anyone who is considering sharing their experiences through The STOP Campaign's [#IDeserveSafety Survey](#).

The [Universities Accord Process](#) is a review of Australia's higher education system with the objective to develop recommendations and performance targets to improve higher education. Sexual violence is one aspect of the review. The review is being led by a [panel](#) of experts.

On 19 July 2023, the [Australian Universities Accord Interim Report](#) was released. This report makes no mention of university residential halls and does not mention student death, suicide or domestic violence (subjects that The STOP Campaign and other advocates consider closely intertwined with sexual violence).

The STOP Campaign wants to demonstrate to the Universities Accord Panel the impacts that sexual violence, domestic violence, suicide and other critical issues in residential halls has on people, and how the institution's responses can cause further harm, in certain circumstances.

1. Who can make a submission?

Anyone can make a submission through this survey, regardless of your enrollment status.

Submissions are open to **anyone**, including but not limited to:

- Current or former students
- Current or former residents at a residential hall or on-campus accommodation
- Current or former student leaders
- Current or former staff or faculty
- Alumni
- Family members
- Visitors
- Organisation representatives
- Counsellors
- Contractors
- Emergency service personnel.

2. Can I help someone make a submission?

Yes. Some people may want assistance in writing a submission. This is appropriate and can be done. Remember that listening to another person's experience can be distressing and you may want to debrief with a professional or trusted person afterwards.

3. Can I make a submission on behalf of someone else?

Yes, but make sure that if you're acting on behalf of someone else, that you have their consent to share their experiences and that you prioritise their interests.

4. When is the deadline for submissions?

The closing date for submissions is 11:59pm on Friday 1 September 2023.

5. How will I remain completely anonymous?

The survey does not ask for any of your details. You will remain completely anonymous unless you decide you want to share your information with us. Only Camille Schloeffel and Audrey Mims of The STOP Campaign will have your information, which will be kept confidential. You can also provide a pseudonym if you do want to speak to us further.

6. Can I make multiple submissions?

Yes. You can make as many submissions as you would like.

7. Can I save my submission and complete it over multiple sittings?

This survey platform unfortunately does not allow you to save your submission and come back to it. We suggest you use a separate, personally created document to complete your submission over time. This can allow you to take breaks in writing your submission and be able to complete it over multiple sittings before submitting to us.

8. Can I edit, add to, or make changes to my submission after I submit it?

Yes, however as this survey platform does not allow you to save and edit your work, you have two options:

1. If you saved your original submission, you can re-submit your submission with your changes and clarify your intentions to us in an extended answer response. For example,

if you would like to delete your original submission or if this is extra information additional to your original submission.

2. If you did not save your original submission, you can contact Camille Schloeffel of The STOP Campaign directly by emailing camille@thestopcampaign.org.au or calling/texting +61405082902 (also on Signal and Whatsapp). This way, you can retrieve a copy of your original submission in order to edit or change it.

We suggest that you write your submission in a word document so you can ensure full anonymity throughout the process. However, please know that any conversations with Camille Schloeffel will remain confidential and you can use a pseudonym to remain anonymous.

9. Can I withdraw my submission?

Yes, however as this survey platform does not allow you to remove your submission once submitted, you have two options:

1. If you would like to withdraw your submission altogether and you have it saved, you can re-submit another response including parts of your original submission. In an extended answer, please request for your original submission to be withdrawn. When doing this, ensure you copy-paste a portion of your submission so that we know which submission you are referring to.
2. If you did not save your original submission, you can contact Camille Schloeffel of The STOP Campaign directly by emailing camille@thestopcampaign.org.au or calling/texting +61405082902 (also on Signal and Whatsapp). This way, you can withdraw your submission and also retrieve a copy of your original submission if you would like.

We suggest that you write your submission in a word document so you can ensure full anonymity throughout the process. However, please know that any conversations with Camille Schloeffel will remain confidential and you can use a pseudonym to remain anonymous.

10. Why are you gathering this information?

We are gathering this information because we want to hear about your experiences so that our submission to the Australian Universities Accord process is accurate, informed and based on real life experiences. The STOP Campaign values the lived experience of the members of our community, particularly victims and survivors of violence. It is important that everyone affected by harms within residential halls or on-campus accommodation is able to share their

experiences safely and on their own terms, especially when these voices are often ignored. Information provided through this survey will be able to inform the Australian University Accord panel of the realities of sexual violence, domestic violence, suicide and other critical issues within residential halls.

11. How will this information be used?

Information collected in this survey will form part of a submission to the Australian Government, as part of the Australian University Accord process. The submission will be drafted by The STOP Campaign. The submission will be released publicly, but all information will be anonymous and de-identified.

If you do not wish for your responses to be included in The STOP Campaign's submission, please select 'No' to Question 1.

In the case that you select 'No' for Question 1, we will still use your submission to inform our understanding of the situation so that we can better advocate on behalf of all victims and survivors.

12. Why are you asking for my input in this process?

For years, victims, survivors and advocates have called for bodies like Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and Universities Australia to respond to the issue of sexual violence occurring in Australian universities. These calls have largely been ignored. The lived experiences of our members and the broader community suggests that the messaging by TEQSA and Universities Australia does not reflect the harms that are occurring in residential halls and the subsequent betrayal by colleges and universities when people try to speak about their experiences and/or seek help.

13. How will my information be stored?

Information will be stored in a **secure Google drive folder** with **access limited** to the Director and outgoing Safeguarding Manager, Camille Schloeffel, and Chair and incoming Safeguarding Manager, Audrey Mims, of The STOP Campaign.

14. Who will it be shared with?

Following completion of the survey, answers will be reviewed by Camille Schloeffel and Audrey Mims for any identifiable information. Responses will then be **de-identified** before being shared with three other team members of The STOP Campaign, who are being supported by Camille and Audrey to provide this information to the Accord Panel.

15. What do I do if I find a question offensive, overwhelming or confusing?

You do not need to include any information that you do not want to include. Only answer what you are comfortable answering. You can also raise your complaints directly with The STOP Campaign by contacting Camille Schloeffel confidentially by emailing camille@thestopcampaign.org.au.

16. Where can I find support?

24/7 support is available at:

- 1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732
- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- 13YARN: 13 92 76

More national resources for support can be found here:

<https://www.saferesponsetoolkit.com.au/national-support-services>

More specific sexual violence support services in each jurisdiction can be found here:

<https://www.nasasv.org.au/support-directory>

This document was produced by The STOP Campaign with support from End Rape on Campus Australia and sexual assault advocate Nina Funnell.

About The STOP Campaign

The STOP Campaign is a grassroots organisation and registered not-for-profit dedicated to empowering young people to create and sustain positive sociocultural change regarding sex and sexual violence by starting conversations and breaking down stigmas. We are focused on tackling sexual violence in Australian tertiary learning communities through empowerment, education, activism and awareness. We are a volunteer-run feminist organisation that values

intersectionality, integrity, respect and passion. We envision a world where Australian tertiary learning communities are free from sexual violence and stigmatisation.

The STOP Campaign launched the #IDeserveSafety campaign in support of the advocacy of End Rape on Campus Australia, Fair Agenda and the National Union of Students, calling on the Federal Government to hold universities accountable for their inaction on campus sexual violence.

More information about The STOP Campaign and #IDeserveSafety campaign can be found at www.thestopcampaign.org.au and <https://linktr.ee/thestopcampaign>.

Appendix 3: Survey responses

Please note that we have only included Survey responses to the extent that each person has consented to participate. For the safety of respondents and ourselves from retaliation, we have de-identified specific references to university staff and residential halls. We have also made minor spelling and grammar changes for readability.

Survey Responses
Respondent 1
<p>What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?</p> <p>I have personally not endured any sexual violence incidents whilst I was a student thankfully, but sexual violence incidents did occur at a pathetically frequent rate. There were times even that I had to personally intervene or place myself in the middle to de-escalate situations from getting worse. It wasn't uncommon to hear of or see harassment and unwanted sexual advances at social events, parties, and so on, sober or not. Some students, without providing identifying information, were harassed for long periods of time online within student online social spaces which needed significant oversight to moderate.</p> <p>What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?</p> <p>Admittedly this was during my time at uni between 2019-2021, but it was frustrating for everyone. There is limited recourse, support and accommodations for anyone who endures sexual violence incidents and encounters, and there's barely anything done after an incident occurs. It more or less gets ignored and endured, and a lot of the onus is placed on those who have endured it. I still perhaps feel a lot of student leaders are not ready or as well trained to handle and navigate between the cracks of these issues. I am not sure how things are now or whether it's changed but I won't be surprised if nothing has [improved] or only marginal improvement has been seen.</p> <p>What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?</p> <p>[I recommend] a mandatory in-person form of sexual and consent education per semester or annually. I realised that this was crucial and in fact changed my personal attitude to consent, and sex when I was at university. A lot of the modules now, while decent in and of themselves, are not sufficient to allow for proper consideration of healthier relationships and boundaries, and I much preferred the modules that I had to undergo initially. I feel it's easier if not automatic to check off</p>

the "right answer" on a quiz, but having an in person discussion about sex and consent and understanding these issues in person over a few days on-top of that has always been significantly more eye opening. A lot of students especially with unhealthy attitudes require personal discussion and challenge in an honest and personal way. If this can be done safely and earnestly it would be incredible. Another point of consideration is safer and more accommodating standards for immigrant and minority student survivors. A lot of students from immigrant or minority backgrounds often feel unsafe escalating or engaging in official channels. Safer or more accommodating standards that include more care and support options with more language support at every step of the way would perhaps fare very well in improving campus safety.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

I'm not sure how things are now, it's been 2 years since I've been on campus. But in my view, when I was there, sexual violence incidents occurred often during non-sober social events outside of pastoral oversight, among friends or peers. For immigrant or minority students it was at a higher and often unreported rate, sometimes outside of these settings entirely. A lot of people I have met or friends I have who have personally disclosed to me during my time at the ANU often didn't feel safe to escalate, didn't know how to, or would feel extremely discouraged by the process of seeking help and support. I also felt while I was there, with the transition to online learning at the time, that sexual and consent driven education wasn't very well received or was quite impersonal for the broader student body. Usually there is a sort of "reactance" that exists for those who find these concepts or the expression of these concepts in this way quite new. I feel moving towards a more personal or workshop-like pedagogical model would have been significantly better.

Respondent 2

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

When I lived on campus, I reported an indecent assault on behalf of my friend. Their response was to interrogate her (she denied it as a result - in her words it was "social suicide to report") and break my anonymity (I reported confidentially). Ultimately they made the alleged perpetrator a Residential Advisor, but also the Men's Officer! Men's Officer is meant to be a guide for all male students at college!!

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I felt really guilty for doing the right thing as [the residential hall staff] broke my anonymity, and I felt like the entire progressive (very left leaning college at the ANU) institution was a hoax. I never reported anything else I saw ever again. I went on to witness suicide attempts, faux suicide attempts (which still suggests mental ill-health), indecent assaults, bullying, and sexual assaults.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 3

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Almost every single woman in my life has experienced some form of sexual violence at university. A member of my family was sexually assaulted in her first year of university by someone at her college. My good friend was sexually assaulted in our first year by one of our friends. We had to continue seeing him living on campus, being moved from college to college for repeatedly assaulting women. I have dealt with young men at my college harassing first year girls, and have heard stories of the sexual violence escalating with each year that passes. I have been harassed, grabbed and groped by men at college parties and out dancing with my university friends. I have been followed down the road to my university college at night. I have friends who have experienced sexual violence but do not recognise it as such - either because they didn't know how to characterise what has happened to them, or because they were gaslit by people around them to play it down or to let it go.

I have been told that sexual violence is an unavoidable part of studying, especially while living on-campus. I have been told by women in my life that they wish they could have taught me better how to avoid sexual violence, but who have never spoken to their sons and brothers about how to "avoid" raping women. I have been given a myriad of tips about how to not get assaulted, all of which limit my ability to move about the world freely like men - don't drink, don't go out, don't make eye contact, don't walk too slow, don't wear headphones, don't smile at him (but also don't stare, otherwise he'll think you're mad at him). It's exhausting, contradictory, sexist, and completely unacceptable.

I am so angry at universities for giving us nothing but platitudes about how they care about preventing sexual violence. This is quite literally the bare minimum. I am sick of reputational and financial concerns outweighing the constant criminal activity happening on campus, and the endless hundreds of young people who are being raped and harassed at university. We're not seeing any actual engagement with students who have lived at college about how to best address sexual violence in their own communities. We have sexual violence prevention modules developed by adults who, despite their valued expertise, haven't lived at college in years.

We're too scared to use the word sex when talking about sexual violence. We're too scandalised by the concept of honest and transparent conversations about sexual health and wellbeing. This country cannot deal with sexual violence, cannot talk about it - and this means we have 17 and 18 year olds entering the college environment for the first time,

without a baseline knowledge of respect and consent. I'm so sick of people I love being assaulted, and I'm so sick of having to talk about it.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

N/A

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 4

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

There is a complete and utter disregard for student (in particular survivor) safety after a sexual violence event occurs. When I lived on campus there were countless times where survivors of a sexual violence incident which had been perpetrated against them at a residential hall had to continue to co-exist with the perpetrator for up to 6 months. The maximum penalty given to the perpetrator was limited shared kitchen hours. Yet, they were still allowed to attend events conducted by the hall (including those including the consumption of alcohol and where people were vulnerable) and share common spaces and bathrooms.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

Many of my friends experienced a general fear of existing in the communal areas of their home. They were deeply traumatised and developed a fundamental mistrust of the university and residential admin features that were DESIGNED to protect us but instead facilitated more harm.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Please listen to the voices of students and survivors as these are the opinions that matter. Policies made about universities only affect those that interact with the university - and thus our voices should be amplified.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 5

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I reported a serious safety concern to the head of hall at my college. I believed there was a genuine safety threat of potential sexual violence. I asked the Head of Hall to discuss my concerns with the ANU. He said, "how will you even know I've had this conversation?" And "I also have the reputation of the hall to uphold." It was a legitimately appalling response.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I had a nervous breakdown, I withdrew from university (HD average). I had to stop working and spent several months hospitalised. I had PTSD and ruminating thought disorder related to this issue. I have managed to slowly get over it through therapy and time- but every time a story comes up in the news I am triggered. I feel compelled to share though, I want the government to take this seriously.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Heads of Hall must be comprehensively trained in sexual violence (not just a tick a box training module but demonstrate an active commitment to changing the culture). All colleges must have a dedicated trained paid staff member for responding to issues of sexual violence. Halls must be audited by an outside body (completely independent and external from the university). Universities should disassociate themselves from all residential colleges/halls that fail to meet standards and cease their operation on campus.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 6

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was sexually assaulted by my ex-girlfriend at my residential hall. She tricked me into coming to my room, told me she regretted breaking up with me from the second she did it, leaned in to kiss me 3 times and put my head in her breast. She kissed my forehead and my cheek without my consent and grabbed my face and said, "I don't want to do something I regret". She knew I wasn't sober and took advantage of my intoxicated state. She lived at Unilodge ANU and was a Senior Resident. There were three formal reports filed from 3 different people and an Incident report written by another Unilodge Senior Resident, yet nothing was done to her position. She not only kept her Senior Resident

position but she was again rehired. I simply don't understand how a Unilodge staff member who knows that a Senior Resident sexually assaulted someone and received 4 complaints about this person could rehire her as a leader, where she has access to people's rooms and is expected to provide pastoral care. Another similar situation happened but it was a male perpetrator, and Unilodge did not rehire him as a Senior Resident the following year. I sought external advice by a staff member in one of ANU's student wellbeing areas, who told me since it was not rape it was unlikely she would be punished. I went to another senior wellbeing staff member at the ANU about the senior staff member at Unilodge, who then ghosted [ignored] me for 3 months. I then went straight to Unilodge and a senior staff member in a student wellbeing area of ANU and they have done absolutely nothing.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

It's disappointing to see how despite [staff] saying they support sexual violence victims it only matters if [the violence is] between a male - female relationship and only if it is penetrative rape. I felt angry and silenced. I felt cheated by an institution that promised safety and protection.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

To set up nationwide safety standards around sexual violence.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Note: Respondent 6 requested and subsequently received a phone call to further discuss their survey responses. They shared the following information:

Respondent 6 went to various teams across the university and Unilodge following their sexual assault. They felt like they were completely gaslit and treated as though what happened was less serious because their perpetrator was a woman. One of the people in these roles responsible for supporting students said things like, "we're here for you, we support you" - but then did nothing. They didn't follow up with or check in on Respondent 6.

Respondent 6 spoke about how an independent body needs to be established to actually decide on what happens when sexual assault and sexual harassment happens in residential halls. And that includes private student accommodations, such as those run by UniLodge. Respondent 6 said that they felt like there is a huge difference between the procedures of UniLodge accommodation and externally owned accommodation. An independent body must be run by trained people who are compassionate experts in this field to oversee reporting processes to ensure student safety is the priority.

Respondent 7

N/A - Questions not answered.

Respondent 8

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Rape, sexual assault, physical assault and voyeurism of women using bathrooms.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

PTSD, time away from studies, academic impact and physical illness.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Compulsory respect and consent training. Firm expectations for perpetrators of sexual assault in returning to fields training with vulnerable people.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

I am writing to address a deeply troubling matter that I experienced during my time at a University. It is with a heavy heart that I share my story of sexual assault and subsequent disappointment with the response from the university. I hope that by bringing this to your attention, meaningful changes can be made to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

During my enrolment I experienced a traumatic incident of sexual assault. Devastated by the violation, I mustered the courage to report the incident to the university. This report came after a particularly distressing conversation with my assailant, during which he brazenly admitted to recounting his actions to his friends. The overwhelming shame and emotional pain drove me to the brink of suicide. At that time, I had not confided in anyone about the assault, as my sense of shame compounded with the knowledge that he was sharing details of my ordeal left me traumatised.

Regrettably, the university's response to my report was deeply disappointing and insufficient. Throughout the ensuing nine-month investigation, I felt unsupported and exposed to emotional distress. Despite providing detailed information about my campus schedule to avoid any unwanted encounters, there were occasions when our paths crossed, triggering severe anxiety and panic. One such encounter, during a critical period of hands-on work, rendered me incapacitated due to my emotional state. I was unable to perform the complex, time sensitive procedures that I had spent months working towards.

I also learned of other instances of inappropriate behaviour exhibited by my assailant, including property damage, bullying and voyeurism in residential hall bathrooms. Furthermore, a friend of his testified to his admission of my assault

during the investigation. Despite this revelation, the university's decision to impose a mere six-month suspension for rape has left me feeling betrayed and unprotected.

Most distressing is the fact that, upon his return, he was permitted to engage in clinical placements at a hospital, working with vulnerable individuals. When consulted about his placement, I expressed grave concerns about his lack of participation in programs addressing consent, awareness, and respect. My reservations were brushed aside, and he was allowed to continue without undergoing psychological assessment or proper training. This disregard for the safety of vulnerable persons deeply troubles me.

It is my sincere hope that governing bodies would take responsibility for the failures of this system and take immediate steps to rectify this situation. My intention in sharing this narrative is to highlight the university's shortcomings in providing a safe environment for all students, as well as to ensure that no one else falls victim to similar negligence.

I implore those in positions of power to consider the safety of its aspiring citizens and to actively work towards creating a safer and more supportive environment for students.

Note: Respondent 8 requested and subsequently received a phone call to further discuss their survey responses. They shared the following information:

Respondent 8 said they were treated so badly by the university that it almost felt worse than the incident itself. They said, "I had to drop my police report for the university case to go ahead". And the reason that they did this is because they wanted the university case to proceed because they didn't want to run into their perpetrator on campus, and they would still see them on campus all the time.

Respondent 8 experienced panic attacks and developed PTSD as a result of their experience and being triggered and terrified about running into them on campus. As a result of their assault, they lost valuable research for their research project they were undertaking at the time.

When Respondent 8 started looking to go back to university for a master's degree, they researched other universities, specifically to look for their policies and procedures around how they handle sexual violence.

Respondent 8 is still having to take medication and still lives in intense fear. They said that the staff that they engaged with were negligent in their interactions.

They stated:

"At the university, there is nothing written down. There is no transparency. There's a lot of big words that they talk about in their big addresses and meetings, but they have no meaning behind them. Universities always talk about having a zero tolerance policy, zero tolerance on sexual violence. But when they're asked about what this actually means, which I did ask them, "what do you mean by zero tolerance?", they couldn't answer. They had nothing to say."

Respondent 8's university allowed the perpetrator to go on to placement in a clinical setting where they would be interacting with vulnerable people every day.

Respondent 9

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

The situation happened in a 5 share [5-bedroom student apartment] on campus.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

[My experience] made me nervous towards the people involved and made it incredibly difficult and uncomfortable seeing them. It ended a friendship and affects future relationships.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Looking at other University of Canberra pages and 'rumours' about people and investigating.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

I'd like to add that the situation was a sexual one and the person involved had rumours of already doing it and preying on first year students.

Respondent 10

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Sexual harassment, sexual assault and domestic violence. There were isolated incidents by multiple perpetrators as well as ongoing incidents by a singular perpetrator.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I failed my entire second year of university, which I did receive a five year academic ban from ANU because of this. I had already decided to leave ANU and my on campus accommodation because of my experiences of sexual and domestic violence. My mental and emotional health was severely deteriorating, and I developed PTSD and C-PTSD from my experiences.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

I felt unheard, invalidated and as though I was a nuisance from the one attempt I made to report one of my experiences of harassment and assault. Whatever the recommendations, whatever changes you choose to implement, please consider how you are going to treat victim-survivors in the future, because I still hold my treatment by the university quite heavily in my heart.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 11

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

People failing to learn and respect boundaries (i.e. people's personal spaces and time). This can result in actions resembling sexual harassment. For example, walking into people's rooms while they are asleep or getting changed or failing to leave somebody's room when they are asked.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

N/A

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 12

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

N/A

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

N/A

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Staff specifically those in teaching capacities need in depth training surrounding consent, gender-based violence, masculinities, etc.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

My story involved a senior lecturer on campus.

Note: Respondent 12 requested and subsequently received a phone call to further discuss their survey responses. They shared the following information:

Respondent 12 was in high school at the time. They were doing a politics-based programme to attend university as a high school student. The perpetrator was a senior university lecturer of that class. Respondent 12 was sexually assaulted in the classroom. During the assault, there was another male teacher present who didn't even recognise or notice what was happening. It was an extremely unsafe circumstance.

Respondent 12 enrolled in the same university a year later, in similar subject matter, meaning their perpetrator was in the same faculty. Respondent 12 would need to make sure their perpetrator wasn't teaching any course they were taking, and Respondent 12 was scared and wary of walking on campus. Respondent 12 did not get involved in any societies, clubs or events related to what they were studying. They were in constant fear of being assaulted by their perpetrator again, or being triggered.

The assault had a major impact on Respondent 12's view of sex, sexuality and sexual touching, as it was their first sexual touching experience ever.

Respondent 12 saw their perpetrator once throughout their undergraduate degree and it was extremely traumatic. Respondent 12 noted the clear power imbalance and that they thought they would be punished if they reported someone in such a senior position. They didn't know if there was any type of service around the issue available on campus.

Respondent 12, while at university, was provided with no information about where to go if something happened while at a club or bar.

Respondent 12 recommended that there must be mandatory staff training and awareness raising about sexual violence, especially for the older generations of faculty that just think they're all too high and mighty, because then they perpetrate sexual violence against young people. There must be more posters and campaigns, different modes of awareness raising and information everywhere on campus about sexual violence, and particularly around consent and harassment. This will in turn help to remove victim shaming in the community and help people to believe victims and survivors. And

just to build more positive communities within University spaces. New students need to be made clearly aware of what's available to them.

They stated:

"I was in my final year of high school when I was sexually assaulted during a special program in university for students interested in politics and to help them prepare for university. The perpetrator was the university lecturer of that class and he sexually assaulted me in the classroom. And there was another male teacher there present who didn't even recognise or notice what was happening and it was an extremely unsafe circumstance. This was my first sexual touching experience. It had a major impact on my view of sex, sexuality and sexual touching, and just created this massive distrust around men."

Respondent 13

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I experienced sexual harassment during an orientation week party during my first semester. A man who I was being flirty with reached down to my crotch and I curved my body and hips away from him. Then he moved with me and kept pulling on my jeans. I eventually moved his hand away with my hand, which didn't stop him, so I told him I was going to get another drink and then I left the party.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I see this man on campus quite often and even in other places around Canberra. Every single time I see him I am reminded of it. I don't feel safe going to parties anymore, so I don't. It makes me disgusted because, whilst I knew that there were men who don't take no as an acceptable answer, I'd never experienced it first hand before. As a biological male, I'd heard people close to me say things like "all men are rapists", which I still very much disagree with, but not feeling safe makes me believe that there really could be a large amount of men that don't know how to see a line and not cross it.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

I've never seen any signs or fliers that advertise free, on-campus support for people who may have experienced sexual harassment/assault either recently or historically. I would have liked to have seen a way to communicate my feelings about it. As such, I have never spoken of it. I strongly feel that education around consent and safety need to be non-negotiable, and that there needs to be more accessible safety measures and support systems in place.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 14

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Not sure but I have heard of sexual harassment being an issue in those places, especially for young international students who are feeling lonely and vulnerable.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

N/A

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Easier access to reporting and more trust in students.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 15

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Sexual assault - I was forced to touch the perpetrator on his genitals during a lecture.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

It affected my entire uni degree, and I have had violent experiences since.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

There needs to be consequences for universities that silence survivors. We need police involved with universities and we need better regulations to ensure survivors are taken seriously and empowered.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 16

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

This isn't something that happened to me, but my best friend. We had just moved from the University of Newcastle to the University of New England and she was living on campus, doing long distance with her boyfriend. She had heard some people around calling her "pretty little dancer" which we thought was harmless, as she is quite petite and used to dance professionally. We later found out that the boys in her hall had a bet going on, for who could make her cheat on her boyfriend first. And pretty little dancer was the nickname they gave her when they ranked the girls on the floor based on "fuck-ability" (I'm assuming that means how "fuckable" they think they are).

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

She was devastated when she found out and became very uncomfortable. She moved off campus as soon as she could afford it.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Awareness around sexual harassment and violence is one thing, but it's not enough. Everyone is aware what sexual harassment is, and what they should and shouldn't do. How it is policed and the repercussions that offenders receive are a whole different ball park. I have seen and heard of so many sexual violence cases, but have never seen or heard of what is done about it. I'm sure it happens, but not to the extent where young men and women feel safe and secure in what is often their first out-of-home experience.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 17

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

My experience dates back to when I was living on-campus in 2016-2017. There was a general culture of harassment. We had to rely on a whisper network to figure out who perpetrators were because the only thing residential management would do - if anything at all - would be to quietly shuffle them off to UniLodge (and then we'd have to warn people there too). I also count myself as someone who experienced sexual assault while living at a University residence.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

A lot of informal support networks between survivors formed - you suddenly had shared experiences with people you hadn't been previously that close to. Personally, I didn't report my perpetrator because 1) I didn't recognise it as assault at the time and 2) I wouldn't have reported it anyway because I believe any carceral response will only ever be harmful to everyone involved. We ended up resolving it among friends and community and now that person is getting the help they need. I'm well and truly moved on by this point so I'm fine. I had people to support me all the way through.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

For Pete's sake, please please please don't do the typical knee-jerk response of an alcohol ban. The alcohol-as-cause myth has been debunked a million times and it's simply insulting whenever university management tries to bring it up again.

I would also request to refrain from just throwing cops and prison time at the problem. The legal system is cruel to perpetrators - it doesn't help them at all on the rare occasions a perpetrator is incarcerated (recidivism statistics are proof) - and the system absolutely destroys survivors. Defund police and instead inject funding into social services like mental health, education and staff that actually know how to deal with college culture rather than underpaid undergraduate students in leadership positions. For further context [read [this Conversation article](#)].

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 18

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I went out with my friends, fully immersed in the drinking culture in college halls. I was really drunk and my friends left me and some random old guy took me home and assaulted me. It took me a long time to see this as an assault because attitudes around drunk sex are generally that [non-consensual drunk sex] is acceptable. We did not receive adequate information about the complexities of alcohol and consent. When I first moved into my residential hall at ANU last year, the most alcohol consent training we got was along the lines of, 'it's going to happen so just make sure you're not too drunk and you stay with your friends'. This is not adequate.

When I realised what had happened to me, I talked to my friend about it and received a very unsupportive response from her. This really hindered my recovery and destroyed our friendship. While this isn't directly related to the residential hall, I do believe that education around this topic would be beneficial, especially considering the prevalence of these kinds of assaults.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

Mental health issues, impacted my studies, destroyed friendships.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

People need to be taught how to have consensual sex, not just told what not to do. Education is needed, both among staff and the general student cohort.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 19

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was in my second year of my undergraduate degree. I had just returned to Australia after summer break (I was an international student) and my friend suggested that we go out for drinks to celebrate O-Week [the first week of the university semester]. I only had one drink but it completely knocked me out. Doctors suggested that someone might have spiked my drink. I was unconscious and I don't remember the rest of the night but I was told that my friend drove me back to my residential hall and called the Senior Resident on duty. I was still unconscious and I was losing my heartbeat so they called an ambulance. I was taken to hospital where my friend was told to give me water and take me home to sober up. While I was unconscious and waiting in the emergency department my friend used my fingerprint to open my iPhone and read my messages. She found out about something she didn't like (I can't even remember what it was) but at that moment she left me in the hospital with the Senior Resident. A couple hours later my other friend texted me because we were supposed to meet. When I told him that I was sick he offered to stay with me for the night to look after me. We went back to the residential hall. I went back to bed and my friend reassured me that he would stay up to do some university work. Later in the night I woke up with him next to me in bed taking my clothes off and with his hands on my body. I remember trying to get out and push him away. I didn't tell anyone about what happened because I didn't think it was bad enough. I also experienced similar things earlier in my life when I was a child and I think it brought back the memories and triggered me a lot. I didn't think anyone would believe me that it happened again.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I lost two of my close friends. I struggled a lot with my mental health. Three months after the incident I attempted to end my life and was hospitalised. I had to withdraw from university courses for that semester which then carried implications for my student visa (I had to extend my student visa but one of the criteria to obtain a visa in Australia is satisfying the health requirement. I really struggled with my mental health at that time which made it difficult for me to obtain another

student visa to continue my degree in Australia. It ended up being a long and stressful process involving appointments with specialists, providing additional documentation, psychiatric assessments etc., which only made my mental health worse). Once I returned for the second semester determined to finish my degree, I found out that the person who assaulted me had his tutorial class in the same building and at the same time as my class so I ended up skipping that class because I was too scared to run into him. I ended up failing and having to withdraw again (and extending my student visa again). I continued to struggle with my mental health and the head of my residential hall made contact with my parents to inform them about the situation. I was over 18 at that time and I begged the Head of Hall not to contact my parents because my relationship with them is very difficult and I knew it would only make things worse. The Head of Hall contacted them anyways (I understand duty of care but it only made things worse for me). I ended up having to move out of my residential hall in the middle of the semester because I could not afford to have my parents involved. I attempted to end my life again and was hospitalised again. I was lucky enough to find a psychologist who has helped me get through all that and graduate. I ended up graduating a few years later than I planned and the hardest part of all was seeing the person who assaulted me get elected as a student representative with ANUSA [ANU Students' Association], graduate and get a fancy job while I was struggling with basic daily tasks trying to keep myself alive.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 20

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I live in a unit of 5 people with a shared bathroom between us (student accommodation). Bathrooms have a main sink area. A toilet and shower branch off from this main area. Both the toilet and shower door have locks but are about 5 cm off the ground. The main bathroom door does not have a lock. I have a friend (female) who was taking a shower when one of the other residents (male) in her unit took a photo of her showering from underneath the shower door. This was without consent, from someone who was practically a stranger to her.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

She doesn't feel safe in shared accommodation with people she doesn't know or trust. It has made her, me and others uncomfortable having showers without being able to lock the main bathroom doors. I felt able to trust my roommates before but now I don't. I can't have a shower without spending the entire time looking at the bottom of the door to see if

there is a camera down there. It makes you wonder if he or others had been doing it before and whether other intimate photos are out there and haven't had the chance to be deleted.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

I would feel much more comfortable if the main bathroom doors were able to be locked in situations where it's in a small group accommodation (where the bathroom only has access to 1 shower and 1 toilet for example).

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 21

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Experienced being called an 'Old Creep' because I'm a little older than most students at the accommodation.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I tried not to let it get to me but I tend to keep away from social events for fear of judgement.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 22

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was grabbed on the arse multiple times by another residential hall's player whilst playing AFL, and goaded with "I bet you like that" comments to try and get me to retaliate.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

Feeling hurt and diminished: there wasn't anything I could have done that wouldn't mean that he won.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 23

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Multiple failures to keep women safe on campus, including 2 sexual assaults at [two residential colleges at the University of New England] in which the offender was welcomed back to campus with open arms, while the women were asked to move if they wanted to feel safe. One of the women was told that the fact that she had autism meant that she had a hard time saying no (which was not true) by the ex-Head of [one of the colleges]. [Name removed] is also unfit to be the Head of college and removed a student who was being treated for mental health problems by removing [the student's] card access to the college whilst she was in a mental health facility. This student was made to go to class in dirty clothes (2 days old including underwear) and no shoes and was locked out of her room for multiple days.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

Many of my female friends do not feel safe enough to leave their accommodation while they are staying here. I personally have had to move colleges entirely due to the poor job done by [name removed] to keep students at [a college at the University of New England] safe. I do not trust many authority figures within the colleges due to these events. If another [event] happens I would rather go to the police as the university tends to keep things hush hush.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Thorough screening for potential Heads of colleges i.e. making sure they are fit for the job, don't have personal bias or bring religion into decision making, making sure they are fully trained in mental health help and first aid. I would also love to see them bring back the food bank as many students are struggling with the cost of living.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 24

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Sexual assault. The perpetrator had also sexually assaulted other members of the college. When I went forward to the Head of Hall, nothing was done. I also did not go forward to the Head of Hall about sexual assault by a member of a different college, as she was friends with [the Head of Hall] on Facebook. Given my previous experience I didn't think anything would be done, and I was worried about it getting back to him. I now work in the community sector and was doing a course where a current staff member in a wellbeing area at the ANU spoke about colluding with perpetrators of sexual assault and how they felt sorry for [perpetrators]. This indicates to me there are multiple levels of staffing in the ANU where it would not be safe to go to.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

Trauma and PTSD.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Heads of Hall and university staff should have some student feedback to their leadership that is clear and accessible. If there are issues around biases there should be another member of staff available who does not directly work in the college. There should be an accessible framework about the steps the university will take if sexual assault from a member of the college is reported to them. All student wellbeing staff across the university should be vetted by an external interstate expert in sexual assault.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 25

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was assaulted by a member of my residential hall and a member of another residential hall at the same time. I was so drunk I couldn't walk when it happened, but both of my perpetrators carried me back to one of their residences, where I was later assaulted by them both. I was confused and scared and felt like it was somehow my fault. It took me almost six months to come to terms with the fact that I had been assaulted. My life, my confidence, my relationships, my health, will never be the same.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I withdrew socially after I was assaulted, and struggled to scrape through my final year of university. I ended up deferring my Honours and not going back to university (ANU specifically) because I couldn't deal with walking around places where I knew I might see my perpetrators, or be reminded of them. I have struggled with sexual experiences and forming meaningful and open romantic connections. I also have struggled with my sexuality, as I am bisexual and one of my perpetrators was the first girl I had ever dated. It has taken me two years to get to the point where I can comfortably consider women romantically, as my first queer relationship ended in me being sexually assaulted by my girlfriend. I will never recover from the hurt my perpetrators have caused me.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

There needs to be more severe consequences and accountability for those who engage not just in direct assault or harassment, but for those who actively contribute to the toxic culture around it. A group of boys at my hall wrote a 'scavenger hunt' that involved acts including 'put cum in the communal hand sanitiser' and 'have sex with X person's girlfriend'. One of the boys who was actively involved in writing this list was suspended briefly from ANU, but a year or so later (after I left my hall) I heard that he was now the President of the Hall. How can we allow people who engage in this culture to be responsible for student communities?

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

My perpetrators were not the monsters that many people expect those who have committed a sexual assault to be. They were seemingly normal young people who did not see a boundary where there should have been an obvious one, and irrevocably and horrifically altered my life because of it. My perpetrators were too caught up in the moment to realise there was no way I could have consented to what was going on, too 'enthusiastic' to realise that I was barely capable of speech, let alone consent.

As much as I am upset and angry about what happened, I feel like I couldn't seek justice because I know that they didn't mean for what happened, but I also know that they might do it again, and I will forever live with the scars of what my perpetrators have done.

Note: Respondent 25 requested and subsequently received a phone call to further discuss their survey responses. They shared the following information:

Respondent 25 was assaulted by 2 ANU students who lived on campus. These were people who would have said that they were interested in feminism and were active in student leadership on campus. They didn't fit the stereotype of a perpetrator: someone who is removed from the community.

Respondent 25 filled out an ANU form to report their sexual assault within 6 months of the incident. Respondent 25 eventually never heard back from the ANU, and this stuck with them. They felt like the ANU didn't care, and that they had presented a service that they couldn't even run effectively.

After their assault, Respondent 25 did not consider that they had been assaulted until, about a month later, when talking about it with a close friend, their close friend told them that they could label this as assault. Respondent 25 wouldn't have otherwise known that they had been assaulted.

Respondent 25 was seeing a long-term psychologist at the time and after they were assaulted, they were so ashamed, they couldn't tell their psychologist what had happened.

Finally, Respondent 25 spoke about the impact of media representations which normalise sexual assault. These representations have a big impact in residential environments. These impacts must be addressed in residential communities.

Respondent 26

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I have heard of violence in residences and drinking culture, and experiences of violence on or near campus.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I did not participate in any parties that involved student residences, drinking etc

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

No action by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) or ACT policing on assault, told wasn't a good witness and dropping case, no support from police or any service, didn't report to the ANU as result but have heard they aren't helpful at all. Later that year more assaults happened in the same area due to police inaction.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

There needs to be a retrospective inquiry into AFP/ACT Police inaction into both sexual and domestic violence and attitudes and treatment of victims, dating back to 1990 to capture the true extent and impacts of this inaction, the intergenerational trauma, more victims being hurt and the individual vulnerability it creates. Instigate a class action/ Royal Commission into failures of police, government and institutions to keep children/students/women safe on or near anu campus and on universities, schools, workplaces and homes nationwide more generally as a violation of their human rights. A national inquiry into police refusal to act against sexual violence and domestic violence perpetrators and the shaming and blaming of victims in the criminal justice system where no-one wants to report to police or engage with law or courts, including making police, lawyers and judges accountable to harms and trauma caused in hostile cross-examination, misogyny, degradation, judgment, and no or lax sentencing for perpetrators.

Note: Respondent 26 requested and subsequently received a phone call to further discuss their survey responses. They shared the following information:

Respondent 26 noted the heavy drinking culture and daily harassment, derogatory/predatory attitudes with objectification of female students by male students on campus at ANU. This included open discussions rating female bodies, identifying new sexual targets or bragging about 'scoring'. There were also sexual assaults after male students followed female students from campus at night on ANUs unlit bike path network.

Respondent 26 spoke about the importance of acknowledging not only student to student violence but also staff to students, and staff to staff. Respondent 26 spoke about a deep culture of misogyny, arrogance, condescension and unsafety. Staff wielded their power and authority to intimidate students, sometimes also misusing their position of trust over young students. Some students were very innocent and vulnerable, especially young female students who were living away from home for the first time.

Respondent 26 said that during their time studying at the ANU, in the English, Social Sciences and Humanities faculties, tutors and lecturers would unnecessarily introduce and emphasise sexualised content into their courses. This included references to female anatomy, specifically the use of the words breasts and cunts in lectures, tutorials and handouts, and engaging in other sleazy behaviour. Male staff repeatedly made inappropriate or sexualised comments in front of young students to the point that it became 'normalised' behaviour. For example, repeated comments by a smirking male tutor to a Sociology class of mostly female students about how and why the word fuck came into use - because, he said, the sound of the word was exactly like the sound that sexual intercourse makes.

Another example of harassment was in the English and Humanities faculty, where a group of students, mostly female, were sitting down in a tutorial, and the male lecturer/ tutor was taking it in turns to leer at them under the desks, up their skirts and between their legs. He did this to each young female student repeatedly during the class. He stood up with an erection at the end of the tutorial. He then invited students to book in one on one discussion with him as a follow-up to discuss their assignments for submission. This behaviour occurred in the 1990s while Respondent 26 was a student, and this teacher is still a faculty member today.

There was an unspoken knowledge and an oppressive atmosphere where it was understood that it was possible for teachers to request sexual favours from students for extra marks. This abuse of power in procuring sexual behaviours is sexual assault. Senior male lecturers were seen sexually harassing their female staff members too.

They stated:

"During my time at university, tutors and lecturers were unnecessarily introducing sexualised content into their courses, being really sleazy towards female students and engaging in disgusting misogynistic behaviour. This included a male staff member who would smirk and leer as he stared up at the bottoms of young female students as he walked up the

faculty stairs behind them from a vantage point where he was lower/underneath and behind them on the stairs. I experienced this harrasment personally and felt scared, uncomfortable and unsafe.

On another occasion I witnessed a young female student exit the office of a male staff member. I didn't know what had happened but I noticed that she looked distressed, ashamed, upset and disgusted.

Another example, was when I witnessed and was subjected to another male senior lecturer who upskirted and stared at all the female students in the tutorial and after this, he stood up with a visible erection in class. This was in the 1990's and he still works at the ANU to this day. I would witness the same and other male senior lecturers sexually harass female staff colleagues too with unwanted 'flirtatious' attention or making overly familiar or inappropriate comments."

Respondent 27

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Sexual harassment, toxic masculinity, misogyny.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

Impacted my self worth and sense of injustice.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 28

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was sexually assaulted on campus during my first year of university. I had just turned 18 and it was my first sexual experience.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I identify as living with PTSD from this experience. I failed my second semester of university and I was required to redo many of my courses. When I went to a university counsellor, I was not listened to or offered any support. I do not associate my university experience with positivity as a result.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

There needs to be more trauma-informed and safe options for reporting sexual assault on campus. This includes support before and after a report is made. Adequate action needs to be taken to prevent sexual violence. We need more education about consent and more specifically, we need more information about support services and options for victim survivors so that we can make informed decisions.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 29

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Whilst living on campus, I have experienced sexual violence on three separate occasions. The first time, I was locked in a room. The second time was a stealthing incident. I don't want to go into the details of the third, however it was the most traumatic for me, and a big part of this was because of the response from [the perpetrator's] friends afterwards. I was socially outcast by a group of boys for speaking out about my assault and I believe this is because they didn't know better [because of a] lack of education and awareness. I spoke to staff at my residential hall and they said there was nothing they could do unless I made a formal complaint. I asked about kitchen hours and they said these had to be "mutually agreed upon" by myself and the perpetrator which is simply ridiculous. The response from my college was awful because the administrative staff "liked" these boys and therefore didn't do anything about it. The only person who was good in this situation was my case manager, but I should have been supported within my college too.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I did really poorly in university for a year, had major sleeping problems and didn't want to leave my room. I lived on the same floor as my perpetrator. I had to see him in so many shared spaces at the hall and elsewhere on campus. My friends were also impacted because they had to see me go through all this and their trust in their university was lost.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Education!!!! We need more awareness and education on ALL things sex. All residences at university should have a streamlined policy that is accessible and available to all. The formal reporting process also should be changed. It is incredibly traumatic. I was told by a case manager that you write a statement, the perpetrator gets to read your statement and respond, then you don't get to see what they have said in return and an outcome is handed to you approximately 12 weeks later.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 30

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was assaulted in student accommodation at a Group of 8 university (the University of Sydney) and because I present as a transmasculine person, I was not able to access a lot of the post-assault services which were geared towards cisgender women. When I attempted to report what I experienced, the University complaints team not only refused to provide me with any communication-based adjustments (such as scheduling interviews in the afternoons due to the impact of my disability on sleep) to allow me to accessibly participate in the complaints process, but also failed to refer me to the Safer Communities team. When I attempted to access support from the SRC [Student Representative Council] caseworkers and from the NTEU [National Tertiary Education Union], my testimony was met with ableism and transphobia: I was deadnamed, for example.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I had to drop my complaint because the process was that inaccessible: universities in general are not disability-friendly, and they're even more inaccessible towards autistic victim-survivors. I had to drop out of my course. I had to stop working. What other choice did I have?

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Implement all the 6 key recommendations from the [Duty of Care submission](#) that the National Union of Students ('NUS') made to the Universities Accord, as follows:

- Allow the Commonwealth Ombudsman to take student welfare and academic complaints
- Develop a National Duty of Care standard for welfare and safety embedded student voice
- Establish a Disability Education Commissioner
- Create a National Taskforce into Sexual Assault and Sexual Harrassment at universities and TAFEs
- Establish Student Voice on Student Experience

- Create a Dispute Resolution Scheme to properly settle student grievances with student empowerment as a focus"

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Note: Respondent 30 requested and subsequently received a phone call to further discuss their survey responses. They shared the following information:

Duty of Care submission, recommendation 1: Allow the Commonwealth Ombudsman to take student welfare and academic complaints.

- When Respondent 30 tried to instigate a complaint against their university for its handling of their sexual assault complaint, their university told them the Commonwealth Ombudsman would not be able to commence an investigation.
- This is inconsistent with the process that is available for NDIS support. Respondent 30 is an NDIS recipient and had previously been able to successfully resolve a (less serious) NDIS grievance through the Commonwealth Ombudsman.
- Respondent 30 said that there are no consequences for universities. They "felt like an idiot" for embarking on the complaints process.

Duty of Care submission, recommendation 2: Develop a National Duty of Care standard for welfare and safety embedded student voice

- When Respondent 30 complained to their university after experiencing sexual assault, their university retaliated against them.
- Respondent 30 had a student policy plan with the disability service at their university. After initiating their sexual assault complaint, the university disability service changed the date of review of Respondent 30's disability policy. Where the policy had previously been reviewed every 3 years, it was changed to be reviewed every 6 months. This meant that Respondent 30 needed to make an appointment with their psychiatrist to comply with the disability policy review process. Respondent 30 felt like they were punished for making their complaint.
- Respondent 30 then complained to TEQSA, who said "it doesn't matter how they treat you" (referencing that there is no national duty of care standard for universities).
- Respondent 30 was assaulted a second time, 1 year after the first incident. This time, they did not make a complaint, out of fear. They now have a "deep institutional distrust".

Duty of Care submission, recommendation 3: Establish a Disability Education Commissioner

- Respondent 30's first assault occurred in their student accommodation and came after a build up of months of ableism, harassment and bullying perpetrated against Respondent 30. This included calling Respondent 30 a "retard" and "uncoordinated".
- Respondent 30 told their friends at the time that their perpetrator was bullying them. Respondent 30's friends said the perpetrator was "just trying to be funny". People would laugh when this harassment was perpetrated in public.
- Respondent 30 reflected that ableism and sexism are two sides of the same coin. If there was no culture of ableism, they would not have been assaulted. There must be a Disability Commissioner to monitor how universities tackle ableism and disability culture. A culture of disrespect was so openly permitted. And until ableism goes away, sexual assaults will continue.

Duty of Care submission, recommendation 4: Create a National Taskforce into Sexual Assault and Sexual Harrassment at universities and TAFEs

- In the first Zoom meeting Respondent 30 attended with university complaints team after instigating their sexual assault complaint, a university staff member spent the first 15 minutes of the meeting providing information to Respondent 30 about the informal complaints process.
- When Respondent 30 requested further information about the informal complaints process, the staff member in the meeting incorrectly took this as Respondent 30 agreeing to an informal process.
- In this first Zoom meeting, the university complaints team invited Respondent 30's perpetrator into the same Zoom call, with no warning, for an arbitration.
- This experience was re-traumatising for Respondent 30.
- A Taskforce with a specialised understanding of trauma would not have allowed this to occur.

Duty of Care submission, recommendation 5: Establish Student Voice on Student Experience

- Respondent 30 was on Centrelink AusStudy at the time they made their university complaint.
- After their assault, Respondent 30 needed to attend hospital for a surgery and was administered an opioid painkiller, meaning they would need to rest for 6 weeks following.
- At this time, Respondent 30 told their university disability team to contact them via phone as they would not be able to communicate via email.
- Despite this, Respondent 30 was copied into a 64-email chain in which a university staff member had said Respondent 30 was "no longer our problem" if they dropped out of classes. The university disability team refused to facilitate alternative communication for Respondent 30, meaning they lost their Centrelink allowance.
- Following this, Respondent 30 received an email from Centrelink saying they owed \$10,000 in debt. This triggered Respondent 30's first suicide attempt in years.
- As a result, Respondent 30 needed to independently reapply to their university courses, and to wipe their Centrelink debt.

- This process ensued while Respondent 30 was navigating their university sexual assault complaint. Respondent 30 had no time to study.
- When this occurred, Respondent 30 emailed [a senior university leader] asking for help. The [senior university leader] responded via email that students should understand the rigour of courses, and that it is the student's responsibility to manage this.

Duty of Care submission, recommendation 6: Create a Dispute Resolution Scheme to properly settle student grievances with student empowerment as a focus

- Once Respondent 30 had retracted their university complaint, their only remaining option was to complain to the Human Rights Commission. This process took 2.5 years.
- Respondent 30 reflected that vulnerable people do not have time to embark on a long Human Rights Commission process. "Universities are marking their own homework".

Respondent 31

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was assaulted on campus when I was 17. It was horrific.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

Depression, anxiety and PTSD.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

They need to do more, students are suffering.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 32

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

N/A

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

N/A

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

1. The current Australian judicial system is completely flawed for victims seeking justice.
2. Domestic and sexual violence education should be added to the educational curriculum.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 33

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

When I was 18 living in student accommodation I was sexually assaulted by another female in my room at college. This occurred after a night drinking at an event hosted by the college. We had kissed earlier in the night, however as I was heavily intoxicated, I fell asleep. I woke up briefly to her above me before falling asleep once again. The next morning I found hickeys on my breasts and was missing a barbell on my right nipple piercing. Distraught, I informed a Senior Resident, a paid member of staff and student the next morning.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

As the sexual assault was between 2 females, management at my college found it hard to believe and believed my claims to be unsubstantiated. For the next month I lived with my assaulter, while I experienced daily panic attacks and an overall dramatic decline in my mental health. The college was persistent that they were going to take no action and I started to finalise plans to drop out of university. Fortunately, external help gave me the contact I needed to escalate the claim to my university. Immediately once I had informed the University, steps were taken and the student was removed from college. Due to my poor mental health I dropped the case against her so she was able to continue to attend my university. However I have not seen her since.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Colleges must have policies in place that support those speaking up about assault. The current negligence is costing students mental health. It is not enough to say you will make change or that you have plans in place. Trauma informed care and how to effectively manage claims of sexual assault must be mandatory for all college staff.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 34

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

There have been many instances (3) where I have been sexually assaulted on campus. For instance, once I had someone grab me and try to drag me into his room. He was drunk and had been trying to make advances at me all night and I kept saying no. I had to pull my arm away and literally run in the opposite direction. He grabbed my arm so hard that it bruised. I brought it up to one of the student wellbeing teams at the ANU, who told me it doesn't count as assault. I refused to report anything after that.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I had panic attacks before class because I knew he was in there. I lost 10% of my class participation mark because I didn't tell the course convener why I didn't go to class.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Just hire people who don't dismiss your concerns. Like my first sexual violence instance was the "easiest" to deal with. The two after that were much harder and I couldn't bring myself to tell anyone.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 35

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

One of my housemates got physically violent on one occasion. We all studied at the same institution, so we immediately went [to the institution] for support. They turned us away and told us we would ruin her life if we went to the police. We received no support and had to figure this out ourselves, as international students in a foreign country. We went to the police and got an AVO [apprehended violence order] in place but the institution we studied at undermined the AVO. It was horrible. I ended up moving to another city because I could not bear the thought of ever crossing paths with her again, and I also wanted to get away from that educational institution who was only focused on protecting the offender to avoid bad PR.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

This experience was terrifying and we were all afraid that she would attack us with a knife next or something.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

The government finally needs to start looking after international students in this country. We are more than the fees we pay and we deserve to be and feel safe.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Note: Respondent 35 requested and subsequently received a phone call to further discuss their survey responses. They shared the following information:

For international students, no one tells you what your rights are, and you're completely on your own. Respondent 35 felt like as long as they didn't know what their rights were, the university thought they wouldn't be a burden. When Respondent 35 had an apprehended violence order approved against their housemate and their housemate left their accommodation as a result, no one told Respondent 35 that they could apply to have the excess rent covered. They had to pay for 3 weeks' rent while they looked for a new housemate.

During the time the apprehended violence order was in place, Respondent 35's perpetrator was volunteering for a church connected to their university. The university asked the perpetrator what services they would attend during the time the AVO was in place. Instead of telling the perpetrator where Respondent 35 and their housemates would be, so the perpetrator would avoid those areas, the university told Respondent 35 and their housemates to avoid the areas the perpetrator would be. Respondent 35 said their university undermined their apprehended violence order. The perpetrator would have breached the apprehended violence order and would have gone to jail or been deported. Respondent 35 said it was terrifying.

At the time they told their university about the domestic violence incident, Respondent 35's university wrote in their emails "we don't want this to go public". Their university made all students sign a non-disclosure agreement at the beginning of each degree or diploma, and told students that if they didn't sign their non-disclosure agreement, their enrolment would be cancelled. The non-disclosure agreement meant Respondent 35 couldn't tell their friends after the domestic violence occurred, because they were scared of how their university might retaliate. Respondent 35 said they still feel too intimidated by their university to share their story publicly.

Respondent 35 now lives in a single-share flat and is too afraid to live with others.

Respondent 36

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I experienced rape and sexual assault.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I am now diagnosed with PTSD and do not enjoy my daily life within my college environment because of it.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

University-run help group for survivors as well as this group providing more information on consent and how to deal with sexual assault if it happens (not just for survivors but also for friends and family).

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 37

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I moved away to Canberra to study at the ANU to escape my past – filled with abuse, violence and countless suicide attempts. I needed to get away to feel safe and be safe, but what I found is that university is not safe.

In the first few weeks of living in a residential hall at the ANU, I experienced hazing, sexual harassment, stalking and abuse by my peers. I was encouraged to have sex with people I did not want to by my friends and in one circumstance I was surrounded by 6 or so of my friends who stole my belongings and were telling me to 'go fuck [male peer] in his room tonight' when I just wanted to go to my room and sleep. I actually brought up how uncomfortable this made me during a FemChats night (regular chats with women and non-binary students) and I was basically told by the student leaders of that session to suck it up and that it's not a big deal.

A few weeks later an older male student brought me to his room to do shots for pre-drinks when going out. I then realised he wasn't hosting pre-drinks and it was just us. He picked me up and lay me down on his desk and aggressively kissed me and fondled my body, while also pouring me more shots. He got mad I didn't have sex with him that night and tormented me for years every time I saw him. I later found out that this man was known as a notorious spiker and that he had been caught spiking multiple people's drinks at commencement (a ball event for the hall at the beginning of the year).

My friend was outside our hall having a cigarette in the carpark, when one of the men who lived at our hall grabbed her, pulled her to the floor and held her down hard trying to take her clothes off and rape her. She screamed and someone came out to see what was happening and he got off her. When she told me about this I decided to submit an incident form to my Head of Hall (keeping her anonymous and with her consent), and I never received a response. He continued to live at the hall for the rest of the year and she lived in fear that he would rape her.

My good friend who lived on my floor was being stalked by another resident (and he was a student leader at the time). One night when we were all walking home from a night out, he started screaming and punching a tree so hard because she rejected him. He then proceeded to become violent towards her saying he was going to kill her. We safely returned her to her room and ensured the door was locked and that if she needed to come out, for example to use the bathroom, that one of us would come into the foyer just in case. The thing is, we didn't know that he was hiding in the bathroom waiting for her to enter. Luckily, one of our male friends found him in there and knew about the situation and demanded he leave. Then our same friend decided to stay out in the foyer to 'keep watch' because we were scared this man would do something to our friend, like kill her. We told the staff at the hall but they decided to do nothing about it. He continued to be on the leadership team for the rest of the Semester.

One night I was hanging out in my friend's room which was closest to the lift, so we can usually hear when people come in. We were having drinks while waiting for our friend to come back from an academic dinner event. When she returned we heard her come onto the floor so we walked out and found her completely wasted with a man studying at ANU but not from our college. He had his arms around her and was trying to take her to her room. Once he realised we would not let that happen because she clearly could not consent, he left. The next morning she came into my room asking 'what happened last night? I don't remember anything after the dinner.' That's when she told us that she only had one glass of wine at dinner and the man who brought her home was sitting next to her. He had spiked her drink.

When I started a women's fitness program at my residential hall, I started to receive death and rape threats. I was called a 'feminazi' and a 'manbasher' for posting in the residential hall facebook group about when our sessions were on. I also started a sexual violence awareness campaign in my hall, of which all of our 'meet the team' posters were defaced with dicks drawn to my mouth, eyes poked out, with 'slut' written on my face, and other horrible things. What made this so bad was that the staff, including the Community Coordinator (a student-staff position responsible for pastoral care and support of the leadership team), didn't back me up or take any of these posters down. They would simply walk past them and when I would bring up to staff about how I was afraid of someone coming into my room and hurting me or raping me, they didn't listen or do anything about it.

All of these experiences are just the tip of the iceberg. Staff did not take any of it seriously and would often just laugh it off or say "and what do you want me to do about it?". I tried to make a positive difference in my residential hall community and I was punished for it.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

N/A

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 38

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was raped in my residential accommodation by a non-student and stalked by a separate person who one day gained access to the building.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I didn't report the rape because I thought it was my fault. In regards to the stalking, I reported it to security however they only worked at night and the stalker gained access during the day. I also reported to the police but they said they could do nothing.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Listen to concerns about safety. More security is needed in gaining access to university accommodation so not anyone can walk in. I also had my accommodation robbed and wasn't allowed to review the footage, it was also not shared with the police. I felt as a student I was not taken seriously.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Note: Respondent 38 requested and subsequently received a phone call to further discuss their survey responses. They shared the following information:

When Respondent 38 experienced rape, they did not know it was rape because it didn't look like it did in the movies. They internalised the experience and felt a lot of self-blame. They are now, 10 years after the incident, coming to terms with the fact that it was their university hall that let them down.

Respondent 38 was sent harassing messages by a stalker. When they told their residential hall security, the security made no satisfactory effort to help Respondent 38. As a result of the harassment and stalking, Respondent 38 feared leaving their residential hall and did not go to their university classes or their employment.

Respondent 38 now has problems with intimacy, and although they have been seeing a psychologist, they haven't been able to deal with their sexual assault in therapy. They said this is causing them harm and pain.

Respondent 38 felt like during their time at university, the security guards at their residential hall would see drunk people as trouble. People who were intoxicated were not taken seriously. There was no support. Respondent 38 felt like their assault was their fault, because they had been drinking.

Respondent 38 said there are huge gaps with how young women are treated at university, and that they are made to feel like things are their fault when alcohol or drugs are involved. Respondent 38 would not feel comfortable with their daughter living on campus. It's an "absolute boys club" and is "all smoke and mirrors".

Respondent 39

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was groped after an O-Week party. My friends and I called it out when it happened and I reported it to a Senior Resident the next day. The Senior Resident lodged an incident report but the Head of Hall didn't deem it a sexual violence case so nothing was done immediately. After rumours started to spread amongst the leadership team about it, a meeting was called with the Head of Hall and all student leaders at the hall. I was made to explain what happened in front of everyone and even when I was crying the meeting wasn't stopped. Finally some action came about and there were safety practices put in place so that the perpetrator couldn't be in the kitchen at the same time as me. However these were 'inconvenient' for him, so the Head of Hall changed them without informing me. He would purposely cook as close to me as possible in the kitchen and attempt to intimidate me. He even wrote a note about how I was lying and put it on his door so that it spread among the community. The Head of Hall did nothing about this, and I only really felt supported after I reported it to one of the student wellbeing teams.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I was traumatised by the experience of having to share in front of the entire leadership team and felt unsafe because I didn't think the Head of Hall was keeping me safe. I was highly anxious and had to seek counselling.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

That responses to sexual violence need to prioritise the victim at all times, with the first priority being to keep them safe mentally and physically. Residential halls still don't have the capability to respond effectively. I wish that I didn't tell anyone about my experience because it was actually more traumatising to deal with my hall than the incident itself.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 40

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was told of the formal reporting process by a member of one the student wellbeing teams at the ANU. This team member said the process is as follows: I would need to write a written statement detailing what happened to me, the perpetrator then gets to read this statement in full and respond to it. However, I would not get to see or hear what the perpetrator said in response and receive an outcome approximately 12 weeks later. This is an incredibly re-traumatising process. Coupled with this and the fact that residential hall disclosure policies are all over the shop and not easily accessible, this is simply not okay.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

N/A

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Students should be able to access disclosure policies. This should be something that is formally written down and not simply by word of mouth.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 41

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

When I was an Resident Advisor, a resident on my wing was taken advantage of and sexually assaulted by a male exchange student who she'd known for a few weeks. They had been talking over messages and in person, they went out to a local uni night and were intimately involved while both intoxicated. At the end of the night she was put to bed,

heavily intoxicated by her friends who told the boy (living on the same wing as her) not to go to her room. The door was left unlocked. He took advantage of this and went into her room. They apparently did not have sex until the next morning. But she cannot remember anything and woke up to him naked with her.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

The male was removed from the hall. It has had lasting impacts on the female resident who had to move to another hall until he was moved. The male resident continues to harass other residents when out and makes people feel uncomfortable. The severity of the issue is maybe not taken as sensitively as it could be.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

All rooms should have easier possibilities to lock the door - these doors are only lockable by key from the outside (no internal locks). Exchange students and international students need to be told about the law and sexual harassment/rape in Victoria. More awareness and training should be done by everyone moving into residential halls.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

MRS [Monash Residential Services] needs to do more to explore ways to talk about these topics, better modules need to be offered. And action needs to be taken in a way that minimises harm to the victim regardless of reputational risk to the accused.

Respondent 42

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Throughout my time living in a residential hall, there have been multiple whispers of sexual assault and harassment going around, and obviously other students talk about this. So many times I have been in conversations where someone mentions e.g. 'X experienced stealthing'. First of all, the follow-up question to this by many men is always 'what is stealthing?' which is shocking that people still do not know what that is. Then, once it is explained to them they say 'what? that's assault??' or 'that's not that bad though, right?'. So many people do not even realise that they or their friends are perpetuating harm, because there is not enough education in universities to teach them what is right and wrong when it comes to sex. I personally have had sexual experiences where physical things were done to me by the other person without consent, and I simply froze. Upon talking to this person about it at a later date, they genuinely did not know that what they did was wrong, because they had seen it so often in porn.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I lost many friends as we had a lot of mutual friends and they didn't see the issue in it and claimed I was 'overreacting' when I said it was assault.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 43

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Across my university, each residential hall has different responses to dealing with sexual assault and harassment allegations. A hall that I was at last year had a "three-strike" rule: if 3 different people came forward with 3 different experiences of sexual assault or harassment, the person accused would be moved out of the college. With any claims less than three, nothing would be done unless on request, but the leaders of the hall were still unable to move the accused out. This "three-strike" rule also applies to deviant/drunken behaviour and noise complaints. If an individual got three official noise complaints they would be moved out of the college. Having the same disciplinary action in regards to sexual assault and harassment and noise complaints is ridiculous.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

This made it very difficult for people to continue feeling comfortable at college, especially as we were living in such close proximity to them. Due to this rule, some people had to remain on the same floor as those accused because they were unable to be moved and there were no spare rooms available due to colleges underestimating the influx of students in 2022.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Set up official boundaries and rules on what is acceptable and disciplinary action to follow or at least adequate support for those involved. Without which, some colleges can continue to disregard these issues.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

These stories are not related to me and were retold to me.

Respondent 44

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

Assault, harassment, sexual and physical assault, drink spiking (all separate occasions) and self harm following.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

PTSD, MDD [major depressive disorder] and disordered eating. It affected my ability to make and maintain relationships adversely (understatement).

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Follow through on what you say you will change for once. Campuses are not safe, they weren't in 2015 and they are not in 2023. I was a student in 2015 and experienced severe trauma in an extremely unsure environment. I'm now a clinical psychology registrar and I know first hand, from my clients, that it has not changed since then.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

I experienced assault as a young adolescent. I was so excited to leave my home town and attend university, live on campus and make friends. It was one of the worst experiences of my life - and that is saying something. The culture on campus is indisputably unsafe and toxic.

NB: Respondent 44 requested and then received a confidential phone call in relation to their survey response. They also provided a handwritten list of notes about their experience. They shared the following information:

When Respondent 44 experienced drink spiking, their university told them they would need to complete a drug test and may be kicked out of their hall if they had consumed drugs. They stated:

"[I was] told by residential manager etc. via email, I'd taken drugs so they were going to kick me off campus. I met with them and stated I had not taken any drugs and they responded, "well even so, you technically did - drugs were in your system. It would be best if you moved off." I moved off campus. I packed myself and left the next day. I remember after this, I couldn't even cry; I felt so numb and I contemplated ending my own life."

Respondent 44 was assaulted in 2015. After it happened, Respondent 44 lost all their friends and found the experience to be lonely and isolating. They didn't date anyone or sleep with anyone for 2-3 years after the incident. Respondent 44 said that they're usually a really affectionate person, but they became a shell of themselves:

"I couldn't hug anyone aside from my Mum. I feel like it impacted mine and my dad's relationship because I couldn't hug him. I didn't want to speak to a male at all. Jumpy; chronically self-harmed. Blamed myself constantly."

Respondent 44's perpetrator was someone very well known (a second-year college student). Before the assault, they had previously touched Respondent 44 inappropriately at various get togethers, witnessed by other students and floor leaders – only one individual ever said something to him "stop, you need to leave her alone".

In the months that followed, Respondent 44 stayed in their room most of the time:

"Stopped attending parties. Barely attended my classes – the one thing I was there for. I NEVER left my room after dark, always made sure I went to the toilet before it got dark. I barely showered, opting to clean myself with wipes and what not in my own room – I never used those showers again. I stopped eating; didn't want to go into the dining hall because I didn't want to see them. My friends who'd encouraged me to report it, turned around and began telling me I was a liar, that nothing had happened (even though two of them had taken photos of my injuries at their insistence the next day to help with reporting). It was so lonely; I had minimal friends after this; I felt depressed, began having thoughts of suicide, began self-harming."

Following their experience, Respondent 44 completed the rest of their undergraduate degree remotely. When they needed to go back to university campus for their exams, they would need to pull to the side of the road multiple times on their way in to stop, as they would experience panic attacks.

After being assaulted by a member of the same hall in which Respondent 44 lived, they met with a senior staff member at their residential hall for support after their experience. At the time of this meeting, Respondent 44 had bruises on their face and body, after the assault. The staff member told them that they would not have to report their experience, and they could say it was perpetrated by someone who lived off campus:

"[I] was told [that if I reported] this, that it would be better to say it was someone off campus – [they] implied that it was more trouble than it was worth to name the perpetrator alongside "there isn't much we can do", "are you sure it happened that way?""

Respondent 44 could not believe this reaction. Respondent 44 felt like the staff member could see that they were in pain, yet they didn't care. Respondent 44 reflected that for victim-survivors who did not have bruises or physical markings, it would be even more difficult for them to be acknowledged.

Respondent 44 said that at night, people would bang on their bedroom door. There was a culture that these things weren't spoken about, because it would "ruin the fun". When Respondent 44 told a student leader in a pastoral care

position on their floor about their assault, the student told them that if they couldn't be fun that night, then they should stay home, because everyone else would be going clubbing.

Respondent 44 eventually moved off campus. When they did, they experienced a social media backlash. Respondent 44 stated:

"[I], received social media messages from former campus residents saying things like "you're a liar" "nothing ever happened" "glad you left" "go kill yourself" "you're a piece of shit." It felt like it was never going to end."

Respondent 44 said that the sexual harm they experienced in university still affects their life on a daily basis. People do not talk about the impacts of sexual violence that remain after university:

"My relationship now, although good and amazing, takes an extraordinary amount of work. Our sex life is barely existent; because I'm still easily triggered and it isn't a pleasant experience for me."

Respondent 44 said they worry about what happens when perpetrators go into the real world, because they face no consequences on campus.

They stated:

"After I experienced sexual assault, it triggered PTSD, MDD [major depressive disorder] and disordered eating. To say it affected my ability to make and maintain relationships would be an understatement. When I would drive to campus, I would experience panic attacks and have to pull over multiple times. I spent years in therapy, paid for diagnoses of PTSD and MDD, and underwent different therapy mechanisms like CBT. I don't even want to think about how much it cost, on top of the cost of studying from a distance, as I moved off campus after the assault."

Respondent 45

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I heard about a guy in my year assaulting girls. The following year he was given a leadership position. My friend was flashed outside of Civic [the Canberra city centre].

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I know I'm really wary of being near that guy. I don't go in the lift if he's in there or in the dining hall near him. I also don't walk by myself in Civic.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Have clearer communication and clear steps to follow when assault happens for victims and their friends. Have harsher penalties for perpetrators (and remove the good character reference). Don't have such poor practices when it comes to supporting victims.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 46

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

In a college-only harbour cruise, I was drugged and experienced severe delusional symptoms, eventually landing in the hospital. Whilst I cannot remember a large portion of the night, I believe I was not sexually assaulted, but only because there were Red Frogs [members of the Red Frog support and safeguarding program] there helping me get home (instead of going out after, as I was pressured to do).

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I found no support from college, in which my Dean of Residents told the college leadership (which included me) that "there were no incidences", there was no follow up on my physical or mental wellbeing, and there was no action taken to figure out who drugged me.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

There needs to be more support for victims, and incident reports need to be taken more seriously, with the incident addressed and appropriate consequences dealt with. It is not good enough to leave it alone and hope that the victim takes action.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 47

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

At a party at [a residential college] at the University of Sydney an older male student ripped open my button up shirt by putting his two hands between where the fabric met, and pulled open the shirt - the buttons flew off.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I was already really self conscious about going to this party because it was called both "spring break" and "shirts off". I went with the floral shirt to be more 'spring break' themed and so I didn't have to go without a shirt on. Him ripping the shirt meant I had to pretend it was okay while my chest was exposed at this party. I ended up leaving shortly after. I didn't know him either. He was maybe a friend of one of the older guys I knew. I can remember his face now. But he wasn't even talking to me, or knew each other.

A couple years later I bumped into him [the perpetrator] at McDonalds and had a panic attack.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 48

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

In my few years in Senior Resident and Community Coordinator roles at a university residential hall, I experienced and witnessed sexual violence, harassment, bullying, victim blaming and institutional betrayal. I supported students who had been sexually assaulted, sexually harassed, and stalked by staff members within their respective residential halls and student accommodation. In one instance a student was being stalked by a security guard who was employed by Unilodge. I was asked to report this to the university on their behalf so they could remain anonymous, as they were terrified of what might happen to them if he found out they had reported. Another Head of Hall had a reputation for 'sleeping around' with students and 'grooming' some of them into leadership positions and staff positions. Despite this being known across the university in student and staff circles, he moved into various student life roles at other universities and continues to be in a similar role to this day... probably still abusing his power to sexually violate and control young students in his care.

Further to this, countless senior staff members would regularly blame alcohol for assault and shame victim-survivors for their 'behaviour' that 'caused' them to be raped. The Head of Counselling at the university told me promoting alcohol was promoting rape, a senior executive of the the university told 100 students in a session at our hall that students can

expect to be raped if they drink, and another Head of Hall would actively blame students who disclosed they were raped if they had had any alcohol when it happened. The result of this is a complete distrust in the people who are meant to be there to support students, and it reinforced harmful rape myths and stereotypes that alcohol rapes people... when in actual fact people rape people.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

My experience in these roles caused me feelings of hopelessness, fear and frustration for my own safety and the safety of others. The way that the university treats its students is disgusting. I personally handed in my resignation and did not attend my graduation. It left a sour taste in my mouth and ever since I have dedicated my time to stay involved in advocating for university accountability on this issue.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

First and foremost, believe victim-survivors and treat them with basic human decency and respect.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 49

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I was a student leader at [a residential college] at Macquarie University. I was seen as a “safe” person to disclose to around the college, and ended up hearing a dozen or so disclosures in the space of a year. The Dean was sympathetic when I came to her with concerns, but she said there wasn’t anything she could do unless victim survivors disclosed to her. This meant that offenders were allowed to keep their place at college, which often included student representative roles. I remember walking into the dining room towards the end of semester two and just seeing offenders sitting at every table. It constantly felt like I was fighting a losing battle.

I was also repeatedly threatened by a man at college. I did something to provoke him, and I was scared that he was going to get drunk and decide to come to my room and hurt me. I locked myself in my room for the weekend. My friends never stopped being friends with him.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

In the first six months of leaving college, I was admitted to the psychiatric ward for severe anxiety and depression, caused partially by my vicarious trauma. I was admitted again in the 6 months following the NSSS [National Student

Safety Survey]. I'm worried that I'm never going to leave this behind. I couldn't go to my graduation because I couldn't stand to walk on the stage and pretend everything was alright.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

Please listen to us. We know what we need- an independent taskforce to ensure universities aren't harming survivors any more than they already have.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

NB: Respondent 49 requested and then received a confidential phone call in relation to their survey response. They shared the following information:

Respondent 49 emphasises that students who are victim-survivors should be in the room when policies and procedures are being drafted within their institutions. Using covid as an excuse to not engage students or have any student involvement is not good enough. They also added how universities appear to be becoming more ruthless in their retaliation and that it is essential that the government intervenes to hold universities accountable for the harm they are causing. Universities have proven that they cannot do this reform work around student safety so we shouldn't be giving them more opportunities to change (no more self-governance).

Students, including student leaders, who are trying to stand up against this issue are being punished and are targeted. The options are either to suffer in silence or for the university to feel like a horrifically violence nightmare. Respondent 49 stated "All of this could have been avoided if the government just listened to us in the first place".

They also added that, "It is so ironic that suddenly workplace sexual violence and high school sexual violence is being taken so seriously. What about university?"

Respondent 50

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

A student killed themselves in their room. When they were found by the university staff, the staff member and emergency services personnel put them in a body bag in the middle of the day and wheeled them out in front of everyone who was around. No warning. No respect. No dignity for the person who had died. It was traumatising and there was no follow up. No changes were made to how Unilodge handled this issue nor were there any referrals to services on campus. The person was an international student who was isolated from their friends and family and in a

domestic violence situation. It makes me sick that our unilodges, residences, universities and governments care more about making money off international students than keeping them safe.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

N/A

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

N/A

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

Respondent 51

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I don't live on campus at the University of Newcastle, but all it took for me to be victimised was to visit an on-campus residence. Last year, I went to my friend's apartment to get ready for the student association's start of semester party. Here, I met her roommates, including a new student who had just started his degree. A man, who after hearing us talking about my past sexual assault, chose to drug and repeatedly sexually assault me based on what he'd just heard. I was sexually assaulted at the university bar, which was witnessed. I was sexually assaulted at another location, also witnessed. I was then raped in the public bathroom at the university residence, and the nightmare only ended when security staff asked for the door to be opened. I was incapacitated. Yet, despite me trying to communicate that something bad had happened, and my friend telling staff she'd witnessed 'multiple non-consensual acts' committed against me, they didn't ask if I needed an ambulance or the police. They left me in my friend's bed, in an apartment where the perpetrator lived and so had access. I was terrified and unable to help myself or see clearly.

The non-response of staff that night harmed me. It exacerbated my trauma, and meant the perpetrator was able to find me the next day and harass and intimidate me. This prevented me from going to the hospital. The assault took place on a Wednesday night, but it wasn't until late Friday afternoon that a staff member attempted to contact me. This is not good enough.

Five days prior to my assault, my friend had rung me feeling unsafe because this man - her new roommate - had told her he'd been twice falsely accused of sexual assault in the past, and had then threatened to punch her on another day. She wanted to report him and I encouraged her to. She did, but what should have been recognised as intimidating and threatening behaviour was dismissed as nothing. It wasn't taken seriously.

Five days later this man's behaviour escalated and he repeatedly sexually assaulted a student – me.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

I started having panic attacks at university last semester as a consequence. This semester, I haven't gone a single week without at least one severe panic attack at university. My heart starts racing the moment I step foot onto campus. The panic attacks last 2+ hours, and I've never had one elsewhere. I now have to medicate myself with Valium and propranolol just to try to attend classes, but I've barely made it through any tutorials. I can no longer participate in my classes, which isn't like me. I'm isolated and have to hide in a building I feel safe in between classes. I can't do something as basic as going to the library.

That's the cost of being unsafe on campus, of facing the reality that your rapist could be around any corner. I've been told the benefits of counselling will be limited because I'm having to enter an unsafe environment multiple times a week. This isn't sustainable. I don't know if I can finish my degree, and I'll be finishing it later than I would have. I get the grades but don't know if I'll be able to do a PhD as I hoped.

My friend was also impacted and treated terribly by staff. I will say that the response of a staff member at Student Living was to try to convince my friend to feel comfortable letting the perpetrator remain in her apartment, despite him threatening her and her witnessing him sexually assault me. They moved him to the floor below her. No one ever contacted her again about the formal report she wished to submit about his behaviour towards her.

It has impacted so many of my other university friends and some of my academic staff.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

I want them to know that while I was being sexually assaulted, I knew. I knew that my safety at university had ended. I knew that perpetrators are rarely ever expelled. The problem is that perpetrators know this too. It empowers them to victimise us. They know that in all likelihood they're going to finish their degree, that they'll walk across that graduation stage with a degree from the university where they chose to destroy someone's life. It's us, the victims, who risk not finishing their degree.

I want them to know that my university's response has harmed me just as much as the assault. I have a word document of several pages documenting the ways staff have harmed me. That's how much harm there has been.

I want them to know that when I expressed how unsafe I was because the perpetrator was still harassing me, staff told me that they couldn't police that behaviour but that I was safe. I am not safe.

I want them to know what we face when we try to change things, and raise the ways in which our universities have harmed us. This year, I expressed how the inaction that night had harmed me, I was told "you need to understand that

staff were in a difficult position that night” and that “intervention is harmful”. I was also spoken to in a threatening manner when I raised other points of harm. This is why an independent task force is needed.

My recommendations:

- An independent task force is needed now. Universities and their staff cannot be trusted to handle sexual assault or harassment.
- Staff should protect victims and ask if they need an ambulance or the police called. Under no circumstances should be left vulnerable to the perpetrator. If a victim is unable to speak for themselves, at least get medical help.
- Reports of sexual violence need to be dealt with swiftly. The delays, going weeks and weeks without contact, only exacerbates trauma. Victims need actual support, not silence. Silence induces helplessness.
- Universities should have to release annual sexual harm reports. They must detail the number of disclosures, number of formal reports, number of formal reports withdrawn by victims, and the outcome of the formal report. The consequences handed to perpetrators found to have committed sexual misconduct must be reported as well. I needed – and still need – this information to make an informed choice.
- Every report of concerning behaviour should be taken seriously. If my university had done so, maybe my life wouldn't have been ripped apart just days later. Universities need to listen to their students and staff who report such concerns.
- Victims should be able to write the formal reports in their own words, or work through them with staff in one sitting where they ensure they've recorded the details correctly. I wrote down everything in great detail, but still had to speak it to staff. When students report to the police, formal reports should be written so that we don't need to go through it again later. Six months later, I was told that the fact the man had copied parts of my past assault couldn't be included because it wasn't relevant and didn't fall under the conduct policy. Victims need the power of telling their story, what happened to them at their university, in their own words. After another unnecessary prolonged silence, eight months after my assault, I faced having to read my trauma and feelings misinterpreted by someone else. This trauma could have been avoided if the process of reporting was better.
- The only acceptable disciplinary action for sexual assault under a misconduct policy should be expulsion. Anything else is tolerating sexual assault. It sends a clear message to perpetrators and perpetrators-to-be – it's fine, they can sexually assault a fellow student or staff member and still complete their education there.
- Universities hold the power to immediately suspend students if there are concerns for others' safety. This should absolutely happen following an allegation of sexual assault.
- The government needs to fully fund services who support victims like End Rape on Campus. As well as back The STOP Campaign and other organisations fighting this.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

NB: Respondent 51 requested and then received confidential follow up communication in relation to their survey response. They shared the following information:

Universities should not be able to have “one person policies”, in which victims are told they’ll be breaking the conduct policy and will face disciplinary action if they tell more than one person in their life about making a formal report. There’s no record of this policy anywhere on my university’s website or public policies - even academic staff have been unaware. I was only informed after I’d gone through my trauma in detail for the formal report. When you’re only permitted to tell one person about filing a report, you’re rendered powerless again, only this time it’s your university stripping you of your voice. It compounds the trauma and further isolates victims by cutting them off from seeking the support of their friends, family, and teaching staff. You are effectively threatened into silence, by means of disciplinary action, because you were sexually assaulted at university.

Universities need to be prevented from offering victims the 'opportunity' to sit in a room with perpetrators to talk it through. This is inappropriate and harmful - it isn't trauma informed and shouldn't be a response to sexual violence. Sexual assault isn't an argument and shouldn't be treated as something that can be resolved as such. This invalidates our trauma and the seriousness of the perpetrator's actions. Outside of a university context, no one responds this way.

Respondent 52

What did you experience, or what experiences are you aware of, related to residential hall settings that you want us to know?

I experienced sexual harassment in university premises (but not residential hall settings/on-campus accommodation) during my orientation week.

What impacts and/or flow on effects did this experience (or experiences) have for you and/or others involved?

Mental and physical health issues, lack of academic performance, accommodation problems etc.

What do you want the Government and Accord Panel to know when considering the changes they are making to the university sector? Do you have any recommendations on what should change?

There has to be more awareness raising during orientation week for international students from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds on how to access support. Support to international students should not be limited to mental health counselling but also legal support because they are not familiar with Australian laws. Student societies should provide more allyship. School administration has to do safety plans. Academic staff has to be a voice for students. Legal reforms to criminalise sexual harassment in universities.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us or add, that has not been included in your answers above?

N/A

NB: Respondent 52 requested and then received a confidential phone call in relation to their survey response.

They shared the following information:

Universities must provide definitions of sexual harassment which are consistent with the state government definition. Sexual harassment is criminalised in Respondent 52's home country. It was incredibly confusing for them to arrive in a new country, experience sexual harassment and not know that their perpetrator would suffer no criminal repercussions. Respondent 52 was shocked that people were dismissive of their experience of sexual harassment.

International students navigate these barriers alone. After Respondent 52 experienced sexual harassment, they were burdened by trying to understand what to do next. There are a lot of repercussions for victim-survivors, but no repercussions for perpetrators.

Respondent 52's academic performance suffered as a result of their experience of sexual harassment. They felt like people see them as a failure.