The Action Plan for the Prevention of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) at the University of Newcastle 2022 - 2025 was created after consultation continued with key stakeholders. This included:

- The University of Newcastle Students' Association (UNSA) submitted a formal report on 20 June 2022 *Recommendation & Response to Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at the University of Newcastle report on behalf of 2022 UNSA SRC*
- Consultation with the Convenors of the SRC Student Collectives in late June (present Queer Collective Convenor, Women's Collective Convenor,
   Parents & Carers Collective Convenor, Accessibility and Equity Convenor, International Students Convenor)
- Sector benchmarking
- Knowledge sharing with Our Watch Respect and Equality in Tertiary Education Community of Practice
- Staff via the Safe and Respectful Communities Advisory Group (SARCAG) and Safe and Respectful Communities Working Group (SARCWG).

Consultation will be ongoing as part of the implementation of The Action Plan and will include stakeholders from key populations groups including: UNSA; SRC Collective Convenors; Clubs and Societies/; Residents; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; general student body; staff.

#### **ACTION PLAN FOCUS AREAS**

The Action Plan for the Prevention of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) at the University of Newcastle 2022 - 2025 has four key focus areas, these are based on the community consultation outlined above, as well as the evidence-based Educating for Equality Framework developed by leading national organisation, <u>Our Watch</u> - an initiative under the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 (The National Plan*).

The Educating for Equality framework adopts a public health approach, utilising a socio-ecological model for preventing gender-based violence. This approach identifies three tiers of prevention and seeks to bring about change within and across the structures, norms and practices which make up the university as an organisation and a community. The Educating for Equality framework also highlights the importance of leadership in driving change.

Evaluation will be a critical component of this Action Plan. Ahead of the next sector wide survey, the University will develop its own data collection methods that will enable us to assess the effectiveness of actions taken as set out in the Action Plan. Additionally, initiatives implemented as part of the suite of prevention programs will have program evaluated embedded.

#### 1. GOVERNANCE - REPORTING | POLICY | PROCEDURES | DATA MANAGEMENT

Policies, procedures, guidelines, and practices are critical to the structural makeup of the University. This focus area seeks to review and update relevant policies to ensure they are addressing gender inequality and responding appropriately to the experiences of victim/survivors and population groups who are overrepresented in the NSSS. External experts are able to provide a fresh view to support the developing maturity of our governance in this area. Additionally, transparent reporting of data related to SASH incidence, prevalence, processes and outcomes is required. This focus area also seeks continuous improvement with regards to the processes and systems in place for reporting incidents of SASH.

#### 2. RESPONSE (TERTIARY PREVENTION) - SUPPORT | SAFETY | SECURITY

Tertiary prevention or response supports survivors and holds perpetrators to account (and aims to prevent the recurrence of violence). Response at our University will be reviewed and improved to ensure trauma-informed, victim-survivor centric reporting options; access to ongoing therapeutic support if requested; best-practice training for frontline staff and other first responders and the provision of the highest level of safety and security on all University of Newcastle campuses. Primary prevention efforts may increase rates of reporting and disclosure, so it is important that response resources are adequate.

#### 3. PREVENTION (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY) - EDUCATION | CULTURE CHANGE | EVALUATION | RESEARCH

Primary prevention works in addition to the response work and aims to stop violence before it starts by addressing the structural causes and underlying drivers of violence. Secondary prevention is an early intervention component which address those most at risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence while primary prevention seeks to address the fundamental drivers of violence. This area will look at whole-of-university education and culture change and will also segment efforts for vulnerable populations groups. Best-practice prevention of SASH requires university-wide, contemporary, multi-modal, evidence-based programs and activities to raise awareness of SASH, consent and consent laws (including the new affirmative consent laws in NSW and

other jurisdictions); respectful relationships, bystander intervention, healthy living and harm minimisation (including responsible drinking); reporting and support for survivors of sexual assault and harassment. This is also an area which presents great opportunities for new or continuing research.

#### 4. AWARENESS - ENGAGEMENT | COMMUNICATION | CONTENT

Results from the NSSS about University of Newcastle students' lack of knowledge of the University's reporting mechanisms are alarming. There is a critical need to raise awareness of the governance, support, and prevention aspects of the University's ongoing response to SASH. A strategic whole-of-university engagement and communication strategy will be developed to ensure our community knows that the University has a zero-tolerance stance on SASH and GBV. An effective communications and engagement strategy will also ensure victim/survivors know how to access the support they need. Additionally, strong communications will help the community to understand and acquire the skills and attitudes to challenge the drivers of SASH and GBV.

#### **GUIDING DOCUMENTS AND PRINCIPLES**

- 1. UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE CODE OF CONDUCT
- 2. STUDENT CONDUCT RULE
- 3. SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT RESPONSE POLICY
- 4. SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT RESPONSE PROCEDURE.
- 5. PROMOTING A RESPECTFUL AND COLLABORATIVE UNIVERSITY: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS POLICY
- 6. 'SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKPLACE' PRIORITY OF THE LOOKING AHEAD STRATEGIC PLAN
- 7. WELLBEING, HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY 2020-2025
- 8. OUR WATCH EDUCATING FOR EQUALITY: A MODEL TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AT, AND THROUGH, AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES

  (AND ADDITIONAL OUR WATCH RESPECT AND EQUALITY IN TERTIARY EDUCATION RESOURCES)
- 9. UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSITY RESPONSES TO SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT (2019)

- Compassion as a first response
- Support and Assistance
- Confidentiality and Privacy
- Cultural Competence
- Natural Justice (for reporter and reported)
- 10. TERTIARY EDUCATION QUALITY AND STANDARDS AGENCY GOOD PRACTICE NOTE: PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR including the Nine principles for managing sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH)
- Wellbeing and safety of the students and staff members who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment are the focus of SASH prevention and response
- Leadership and governance ensure institution wide action
- SASH policies are in place and inclusive
- A safe environment is provided for all staff and students
- Comprehensive education and information materials are widely available and regularly updated
- Staff and students are trained to confidently recognise, prevent and respond to SASH
- Support is accessible and timely for all parties involved
- Incident reporting and the provider's response are well thought out and fit for purpose
- Ongoing innovation, evaluation and improvement of SASH prevention and response measures

#### **TIMEFRAMES**

Short – Action within 6-12 months

Medium – Action within 12-18 months

Long – action within 18-36 months.

### THE ACTION PLAN

#### **FOCUS AREA - GOVERNANCE**

### 1. REPORTING | POLICY | PROCEDURES | DATA MANAGEMENT

- Awareness of reporting avenues and outcomes
- Campus Care and support services resourcing > wait times
- Transparency about how information is used
- Trust in the process (time frames + appropriateness of outcomes)
- Understanding of SASH as a crime
- Challenges for those with disability including cognitive disability
- Impact of reporting on academic standing

ACTION	DELIVERABLES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
1.1. Review   update   create relevant policies, procedures and guidelines (External reviewer to be engaged)	Engage external expert reviewer  External report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed internally and final recommendations provided  Updates completed as per final recommendations	Office of the Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Academic) and Vice-President	Short – engage reviewer/review  Medium – Updates completed

Review and update reporting options     (accessible + trauma-informed + victimsurvivor centric + CALD)	Engage expert reviewer (internal or external)  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed internally and final recommendations provided  Updates completed as per final recommendations	Office of the Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Academic) and Vice-President	Short
Victim-survivor informed review and update of Adverse Circumstances process	Engage expert reviewer (internal or external)  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed internally and final recommendations provided  Updates completed as per final recommendations	Office of the Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Academic) and Vice-President	Short
Create and publish documentation on sexual misconduct process and how information is used in sexual misconduct cases – include information on academic standing	Content created re sexual misconduct process with a student audience in mind.  Content approved and published on website.	Office of the Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Academic) and Vice-President	Short

1.5. Evaluate data on wait times for support for SASH reports	Collection of data on wait times for support for SASH reports  Data compared to best practice for support for SASH victim/survivors  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed and adjustments to process/resourcing for support as required	Office of the Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Academic) and Vice-President	Medium
Review accessibility of sexual misconduct information and process	Engage expert accessibility reviewer (internal or external)  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed internally and final recommendations provided  Updates completed as per final recommendations	Senior Manager, AccessAbility and Support	Medium
1.7. Develop and implement reporting function in MyUni App	IT to provide recommendations on reporting functionality on app  If functionality is feasible content created as required  Reporting function added to MyUni App as per IT recommendations	IT Business Partner + Respectful Communities Coordinator	Medium

	Promotion of functionality to students		
Develop institutional data collection methods to enable the University to track progress in relation to the effectiveness of SASH response and prevention actions implemented	SPP to provide recommendations on existing data collection methods and development of new data collection tool  Data collection tool developed  Data gathered and analysed	Director Strategy, Planning and Performance	Medium > long
Develop and implement a process and schedule for institution-wide SASH data collection and reporting	Report on current process for institution-wide data collection and reporting with recommendations outlining purpose of future data collection and reporting, and recommended process and schedule provided  Recommendations assessed internally and final recommendations provided  Process and schedule implemented as per final recommendations	Director Strategy, Planning and Performance	Medium
1.10. Consult and engage with multiple and diverse student groups including: UNSA; SRC Collective Convenors; Clubs and Societies/; Residents/Student Living; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; general student body; staff	Schedule for stakeholder engagement - including focus groups - is created in consultation with key stakeholders  Stakeholder engagement schedule implemented	Respectful Communities Coordinator	Ongoing

#### **FOCUS AREA – RESPONSE (TERTIARY PREVENTION)**

### 2. SUPPORT | SAFETY | SECURITY

- Barriers to accessing support guilt/ shame/ not a serious offence/ fears around confidentiality/ poor previous experience/ male victim/survivors
- Diversity of support staff
- Safety on campus safe spaces, lighting, security response times, appropriateness of security response
- Resourcing of Campus Care and other support services
- Inappropriate responses from Security and other frontline staff

ACTION	DELIVERABLES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
2.1. Document and review support options on all University campuses and locations	Engage reviewer (internal)  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed and final recommendations provided  Updates completed as per final recommendations	Senior Manager, Counselling and Psychological Services	Medium

2.2. Establish physical 'safe space' at Callaghan	Engage with IFS to outline purpose and requirements (completed)  Secure appropriate site  Cross-divisional project team created for space development  Space developed  Space opened to students  Space promoted to students	Chief Operating Officer/ Deputy Director Campus Development	Short = Commitment Long= implementation
2.3. Implement 'Safer Library' Initiative	Frontline staff training: Cultural Competency (completed); Ally training (completed); Responding to disclosures of sexual violence (completed); Bystander Intervention Training (to be developed); Dealing with difficult clients in frontline service (to be developed)  Infrastructure: Installation of security help phones/duress points in our 24/7 zones; Closer collaboration with security on student feedback with a focus on after hours support; Library sites registered under the Welcome Here initiative. Working with IFS	University Librarian	Short

	review of internal/external camera coverage.  Look for a Lanyard campaign: An all-inclusive campaign about Lanyards signifying staff as an ally for all things – safety, resource finding, assistance etc.		
2.4. Document and review lighting and other security elements on all campuses	Engage reviewer (internal)  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed and final recommendations provided  Updates completed as per final recommendations	Security Manager	Short
2.5. Review and enhance Safety and Security information and services in MyUni App	Engage reviewer (internal)  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed and final recommendations provided  Updates completed as per final recommendations	IT Business Partner + Security Manager + Respectful Communities Coordinator	Medium

2.6. Review resourcing for Campus Care	Consult with Campus Care team on additional resourcing requirements  Recruit or otherwise provide additional resourcing to Campus Care team as recommended	Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice-President	Short
2.7. Review and report on gender diversity procedures in recruitment of support staff (CAPS)	Consult with EDI Manager and CAPS senior manager to assess recruitment processes  Recommendations (if any) provided  Update recruitment processes if required	Associate Director - Student Wellbeing	Medium
2.8. Review and report on current training for Security and frontline Staff	Engage reviewer (internal)  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed and final recommendations provided  Updates to training program completed as per final recommendations	Security Manager + Associate Director, Wellbeing, Health and Safety	Medium

2.9. Develop and implement first responders' network	Benchmark first-responders networks across the university sector  First-responders network project team formed  First-responders framework created  First-responders network established  First-responders network promoted	Respectful Communities Coordinator + Campus Care team	Medium
2.10. Engage with external student accommodation providers to share knowledge and ensure best practice for student safety and support	Establish project team with Student Living for engagement with external providers  Guidelines created for best practice and collaboration re support for students living in externally hosted student accommodation  External student accommodation providers engaged  Guidelines shared with external providers  Schedule for ongoing engagement created and implemented	General Manager Student Living	Medium

2.11. Consult and engage with multiple and diverse student groups including: UNSA; SRC Collective Convenors; Clubs and Societies/; Residents/Student Living; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; general student body; staff

Schedule for stakeholder engagement - including focus groups - is created in consultation with key stakeholders,

Stakeholder engagement schedule implemented

Respectful Communities Coordinator

Ongoing

#### FOCUS AREA – PREVENTION (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY)

3. EDUCATION | CULTURE CHANGE | EVALUATION | RESEARCH

- Consent education Consent Matters is not enough/ additional, engaging and ongoing consent, ethical bystander, sex and relationship education, ensuring affirmative consent laws are included in education programs
- Consultation with students regarding education programs
- Responding to disclosures training for student-facing staff
- Training for Club executives
- Specific education for residents
- Resources

3.1. Mandatory training for Clubs and Societies executives	Consult with UNSA for review of current training for Clubs and Societies executives  Deliver report with recommendations for C&S training program  Implement recommendations	UNSA General Manager	Medium
3.2. Review and update training for all staff	Review current staff training  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed and final recommendations provided  Implement recommendations	Associate Director, Wellbeing, Health and Safety	Short
3.3. Review event framework for on-campus events	Consult with relevant stakeholders to determine existing event frameworks across the university  Review existing frameworks and report on recommendations if required  Implement recommendations	Associate Director Student Engagement + General Manager Student Living +UNSA General Manager	Short
3.4. Review student Onboarding and orientation experience; suggested name change to 'Welcome Week'	Reviewer engaged  Report on onboarding and orientation experience with recommendations if required	Associate Director Student Engagement	Medium

	Recommendations assessed and final recommendations provided Implement recommendations		
3.5. Review and improve the 2022 Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) Program at Student Living	Create cross-portfolio team to review Student Living SRE Program  Report completed with recommendations if required  Program updated to incorporate recommendations	General Manager Student Living	Short
3.6. Create and implement Safe and Respectful education content on MyUni app	IT to provide recommendations on adding educational content to app  If content addition is feasible content created as required  Development of appropriate educational content for MyUni app  Uploading of content to app  Promotion of content to students	IT Partner + Respectful Communities Coordinator	Medium
3.7. Develop and deliver education/support training module for all students before placement/field trips	Form education/training module development team with relevant stakeholders  Development of educational/training module	Respectful Communities Coordinator + Senior Manager Education and Innovation (College of Human and Social Futures/	Medium

	Delivery of module to students	College of Engineering, Science and Environment/ College of Health, Medicine and Wellbeing)	
3.8. Develop suite of contemporary, evidence-based primary prevention education programs including targeted education for key population groups: Residents/ Club Executives/ CALD students/ International students	Form primary prevention education program project team  Develop primary prevention education programs to build on Consent Labs  Deliver programs to students  Evaluate programs	Respectful Communities Coordinator	Medium
3.9. Creation of a University-wide SASH/GBV Prevention strategy	Form project team  Develop University-wide SASH/GBV Prevention strategy	Respectful Communities Coordinator + Director, Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education	Long
3.10. Consult and engage with multiple and diverse student groups including: UNSA; SRC Collective Convenors; Clubs and Societies/; Residents/Student Living; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; general student body; staff	Schedule for stakeholder engagement - including focus groups - is created in consultation with key stakeholders, Stakeholder engagement schedule implemented	Respectful Communities Coordinator	Ongoing

#### **FOCUS AREA - AWARENESS**

### 4. ENGAGEMENT | COMMUNICATION | CONTENT

- Language and content is not Inclusive, accessible language and content
- Website is hard to navigate
- Communications need to be trauma-informed
- There is not enough communication around reporting and issues associated with SASH

ACTION	ОИТРИТ	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
4.1. Review/ evaluate /update No Room For campaign site according to current best victim-survivor centered practice and contemporary communication/social marketing principles and trends	Form project team with Student Comms and Web team and other relevant stakeholders including CAPS, Campus Care and Student Living to review No Room For website  Report completed with recommendations  Recommendations implemented	Respectful Communities Coordinator + Manager Student Information and Communications + Web Manager	Short
4.2. Review/ evaluate/update all relevant SASH/sexual health/ respectful relationships web pages according to current best victim-survivor centered practice and contemporary	Form project team with Student Comms and Web team and other relevant stakeholders including CAPS, Campus Care and Student Living to review all relevant web pages	Respectful Communities Coordinator + Manager Student Information and Communications + Web Manager	Short

communication/social marketing principles and trends	Report completed with recommendations  Recommendations implemented		
4.3. Research and implement 'quick exit' button for relevant web pages	Web team provide information re feasibility of 'quick exit' button  Relevant web pages for 'quick exit' button identified  "Quick exit' button added to relevant web pages	Respectful Communities Coordinator + Web Manager	Short
4.4. Develop an "Always On' Safe and Respectful Communities Communications campaign (staff and student audiences)	Engage with Student and staff communications teams to develop 'always on' SARC communications plan  Plan implemented	Manager Student Information and Communications	Short - Medium
4.5. Engage accessibility expert for web content	Engage external expert reviewer  Report completed with recommendations if required  Recommendations assessed internally and final recommendations provided  Updates completed as per final recommendations	Web Manager	Medium

4.6. Develop and implement Safe and Respectful Community education content on MyUni app (as per item 3.6)	Development of appropriate educational content for MyUni app Uploading of content to app	IT Partner + Respectful Communities Coordinator	Medium
4.7. Consult and engage with multiple and diverse student groups including: UNSA; SRC Collective Convenors; Clubs and Societies/; Residents/Student Living; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; general student body; staff	Schedule for stakeholder engagement - including focus groups - is created in consultation with key stakeholders,  Stakeholder engagement schedule implemented	Respectful Communities Coordinator	Ongoing

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

- Consideration 1 Key population groups
- Consideration 2 Priority locations (Library, Student Living, individual campus locations, external education providers, placement locations)
- Consideration 3 Time frames short (quick wins), medium, long
- Consideration 4 Responsibilities
- Consideration 5 Resourcing
- Consideration 6 Tracking, measuring, review and evaluation
- Consideration 7 Research + Evidence base for initiatives
- Consideration 8 Data Reporting