

THE HUNTING GROUND AUSTRALIA PROJECT



EVALUATION REPORT 2023

ACRONYMS

AHRCentre	Australian Human Rights Centre, UNSW
AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission
EROC Australia	End Rape on Campus Australia
Go8	Group of Eight
NOWSA	Network of Women Students Australia
NSSS	National Student Safety Survey
NUS	National Union of Students
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
THGAP	The Hunting Ground Australia Project
UCA	University Colleges Australia
UA	Universities Australia

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Impact Producer Mary Macrae

Cover image by Thomas Patterson
Thanks to Sharna Bremner, Renee Carr, Anna Kaplan

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The Hunting Ground Australia Project (2015-2018) was highly effective in utilising the documentary *The Hunting Ground* (2015) to create a collaborative, comprehensive and unified campaign around the incidence of, and responses to, sexual violence within Australian university communities.

THGAP's multi-faceted impact campaign, accompanied by partner initiatives and ongoing student and activist campaigning, directly led to:

- a national campus screening program of *The Hunting Ground* that engaged and shifted attitudes in Australian universities and residential colleges, the media and governments to establish sexual violence in Australian university environments as an issue requiring ongoing attention;
- a national student survey, establishing the first national baseline data on the incidence of sexual violence in Australian universities and residential colleges (Australian Human Rights Commission's *Change the Course* report, August 2017);
- the development of a comprehensive good practice guide, drawing on international precedent, for application in Australian universities (Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW's *On Safe Ground* report, August 2017);
- the adaptation of existing ethics and sexual consent training programs to the Australian university context, for delivery in Australian universities and residential colleges (Full Stop Foundation's *Sex, Safety & Respect* program, 2016-ongoing);
- significant improvements in residential colleges providing sexual violence prevention training to their students and staff, and in utilising expert sexual assault services in providing that training (Fair Agenda's residential college campaign, 2016-2020);
- the production of three media factsheets to improve media coverage of sexual assault and harassment in Australian university environments (Full Stop Foundation Ambassador and journalist Nina Funnell, 2017);
- a commitment to the establishment of an independent expert-led national taskforce (Australian Labor Party federal opposition, 2018);
- increased student and stakeholder activism around sexual violence in Australian university environments;
- regular media coverage of incidents of sexual violence in university settings, with a spotlight on institutional responses; and

- strengthened organisational capacity, including the establishment of End Rape on Campus Australia as an incorporated body that continues to support student and survivors' voices and campaign for institutional reforms (2018-ongoing).

These efforts in turn led to:

- sector-wide commitments to improvements in the management and prevention of campus sexual violence (Universities Australia, University Colleges Australia, individual universities and residential colleges, 2016-ongoing)
- enhanced regulatory attention on Australian universities in their management and prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment (TEQSA, 2017-ongoing)
- the implementation of a second national student survey (NSSS, 2021).



THE HUNTING GROUND

The Hunting Ground (103 minutes, 2015) is a critically acclaimed US feature-length documentary by Oscar-nominated filmmakers Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering. *The Hunting Ground* chronicles the personal stories of students who have reported sexual assault on campuses, and the failure of a number of American universities to respond effectively and appropriately to these reports.

GOOD PITCH AUSTRALIA BACKGROUND

The Hunting Ground was acquired for distribution in Australia by Madman Entertainment after premiering at the Sundance Film Festival 2015 and was one of six documentary films selected for Good Pitch² Australia, the philanthropic initiative held at the Sydney Opera House on 16 September 2015.

Good Pitch brings together filmmakers with foundations, not-for-profits, campaigners, philanthropists, policy-makers, brands, educators, broadcasters and media to forge powerful alliances around ground breaking films that will have a significant impact in relation to issues of social importance – and benefit the partners, the development of the films and society as a whole.

At the Good Pitch event, producer Amy Ziering and The Hunting Ground Australia Project (THGAP) Campaign Director Allison Henry outlined their ambitions for the project, while key stakeholders from the sector discussed the possibilities that *The Hunting Ground* presented here in Australia.

From the outset, the objective of the impact campaign was to use *The Hunting Ground* as a catalyst to involve the whole sector – both staff and students – in taking a positive leadership role in the creation of a collaborative, comprehensive and unified campaign, around the incidence of, and responses to, sexual violence within Australian university communities.

**"I KNOW YOU WILL BE SAVING NOT
ONLY CURRENT GENERATIONS,
BUT FUTURE ONES AS WELL.
IT'S TIME TO END THE SHAME AND
BLAME AROUND THIS ISSUE
AND TO FINALLY AND LOUDLY SAY
YES TO CONSENT, AND NO TO VIOLENCE
AND THE SILENCE."**

Amy Ziering at 2015 Good Pitch event



At the time that The Hunting Ground Australia Project was conceived in 2015, there was no comprehensive, sector-wide independent statistical information about the prevalence of sexual assault, sexual threats and sexual harassment in Australian university settings.

What we did know was that the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2012 had found that 1 in 5 women and 1 in 20 men in Australia had experienced sexual violence since the age of 15¹ and that women in the 18 to 24 years age group – then accounting for some 59% of students at Australia’s higher education institutions² – were more likely, compared to all women, to have experienced sexual assault in the 12 months prior to the survey.

The 2011 *Review into the Treatment of Women at the Australian Defence Force Academy* (ADFA) and examined the incidence of sexual violence there. The review team found that ADFA was “not alone in facing these challenges. Other tertiary institutions and residential colleges have similar concerns.”³

This finding was supported by regular, but ad hoc, media reporting and a National Union of Students (NUS) *Talk About It* survey in 2010-2011⁴ that found that 25% of respondents had unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature and 17% had experienced rape. Only 3% of respondents who had experienced assault or harassment had reported it to their university and only 2% reported it to the police.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics’ (ABS), “Prevalence of violence – Since the Age of 15”, 2012 *Personal Safety Survey* (PSS), ABS cat. no. 4906.0, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/12FE9E8891F24C7DCA257C3D000D8254?opendocument> Note that the ABS defines “sexual violence” as including sexual assault and/or sexual threat.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Hitting the books: Characteristics of higher education students*, Based on Australian Social Trends, ABS cat no. 4102.0, released 25 July 2013, www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features20July+2013#p2

³ Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), *Report on the Review into the Treatment of Women at the Australian Defence Force Academy: Phase 1 of the Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force* (Phase 1 Report), 3 November 2011, p.xxv, http://defencereview.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/ADFA_2011.pdf

⁴ Courtney Sloane assisted by Keelia Fitzpatrick, National Union of Students Women’s Department, *Talk About It Survey: Results and Recommendations*, 2011.

While there had been decades of advocacy efforts by students, women's groups and sexual assault services to bring attention to the incidence of, and responses to, sexual violence within Australian university communities, they had experienced limited success. There was, at the commencement of The Hunting Ground Australia Project in 2015, no consistent national activism or any grassroots organisation focused on advocating around the issue of sexual violence in Australian university settings.

Furthermore, Australian universities had demonstrated that they were not particularly interested in proactively dealing with these issues. Universities Australia's 2014-2016 Strategic Plan contained no reference to addressing sexual violence⁵ and in November 2014 the Group of Eight had shelved action on the ADFA Review's recommendation to collect and share data about sexual violence on their campuses.⁶

⁵ Universities Australia, *Universities Australia's 2014-2016 Strategic Plan*, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/About-Us/our-role/strategic-plan>

⁶ Kate Stanton, *Survey of sex assaults on university campuses shelved*, Sydney Morning Herald, 16 November 2014, <http://www.smh.com.au/national/survey-of-sex-assaults-on-university-campuses-shelved-20141114-11na07.html>

CAMPAIGN TIMEFRAMES

The THGAP Impact Strategy was devised between May and September 2015 with implementation of the Strategy commencing in late 2015, following the Good Pitch event in September 2015.

It was anticipated at Good Pitch that the campaign would run for two to three years. Four of the initial five themes in the Strategy were completed by August 2017. From September 2017 to December 2018 the THGAP team worked with partners to consolidate this work, most particularly to campaign for the establishment of an independent, expert-led national Taskforce.

In 2019-20 the THGAP team continued to liaise with and support partners, most particularly EROC Australia and Fair Agenda, around key developments and their own projects to address campus sexual violence.

This project evaluation was completed in early 2023.

THE IMPACT TEAM

Over the course of the Project, the THGAP team included:

- Allison Henry (THGAP Campaign Director)
- Mary Macrae (Shark Island Institute – THGAP Impact Producer)
- Anna Kaplan (Madman Entertainment – THGAP Campus Screenings Producer)
- Isabella Wright and Tamar Simons (Madman Entertainment – THGAP Campus Screenings Assistants)
- Amy Ziering (Producer, The Hunting Ground) was international consultant to the project.

CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

The initial project budget, raised at the Good Pitch event in September 2015, was \$991,000.

This initial funding was later augmented by a grant from The Caledonia Foundation (2017) for the campaign consolidation work and collaborative campaigning following the release of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports in August 2017.

A further grant from the Snow Foundation (2018/2019) was provided to continue the work being led by THGAP partners Fair Agenda and EROC Australia.

CAMPAIGN FUNDERS

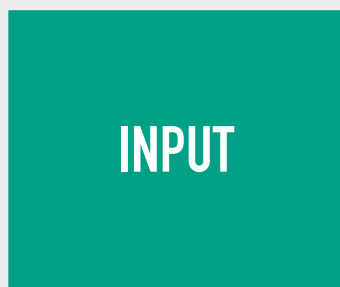
THGAP project funders were:

Ian Darling, Shark Island Institute	The Caledonia Foundation
The Paradise Family Foundation	Annabel Montgomery
Anthony and Marina Darling	Jillian Segal
Australian Women Donor Network	English Family Foundation
The Danielle and Daniel Besen Foundation	Thyne Reid Foundation
River Capital Foundation	The Snow Foundation
Georgina Byron	Sydney Community Foundation
George and Freda Castan Families Charitable Foundation	Adair Donaldson
Dobkin Family Foundation	Mim and Michael Bartlett
Konica Minolta – David Cooke	DocRossFoundation
Sue Jacobs	Phillip Cornwell
Seri Renkin	And anonymous donors

IMPACT STRATEGY

THEORY OF CHANGE

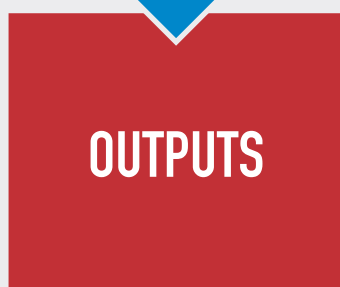
THGAP's theory of change recognised that cultural and behavioural change around sexual assault and sexual harassment in Australian university environments was dependent on changing minds, building activism and driving institutional reform.



It was hoped that by using the documentary and impact strategy...



...to "start a conversation", engaging institutional leadership; mobilising student and stakeholder interest; and catalysing institutional change...



...to establish sexual violence at universities as an issue in Australia; increase student and stakeholder activism; and encourage reforms in how universities, residential colleges and governments manage and prevent sexual violence in Australian university environments...



...positively changing campus cultures to reduce incidents of sexual assault and harassment.



IMPACT OBJECTIVES

The THGAP strategy was premised on the documentary providing an opportunity to initiate conversations and drive progress around issues including but not limited to:

- the effectiveness of existing procedures, protocols and institutional responses;
- the issue of victim blaming;
- the impact of alcohol;
- interpretations of consent;
- bystander engagement;
- the prevalence of sexual crime and reporting of those crimes; and
- the need for comprehensive data to inform the conversation.

It was hoped that the Impact Strategy would encourage:

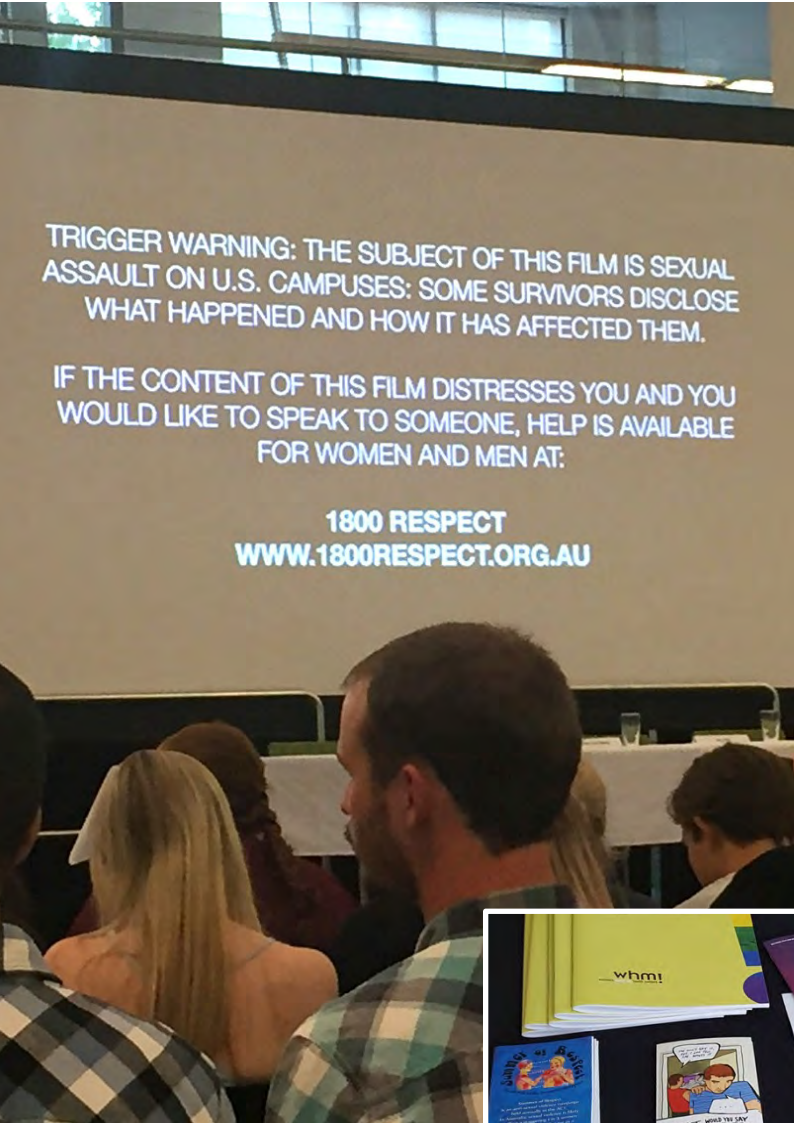
- the endorsement and implementation of more robust and effective policies and protocols by universities and residential colleges;
- increased provision of qualified prevention, sexual ethics and consent training in universities and residential colleges;
- greater utilisation of existing legislative frameworks, particularly TEQSA's Threshold Standards;
- the development of more robust regulatory and oversight frameworks; and
- create sustained impact via cultural change.

TARGET AUDIENCES

The THGAP Impact Strategy was national in reach and aimed to engage the entire Australian university sector in taking a positive leadership role in the creation of a collaborative, comprehensive and unified campaign.

Specific target audiences were identified for each of the Impact Themes:

TARGET AUDIENCES	Impact Theme 1: Changing minds – utilising the documentary to “start a conversation” and establish sexual violence at universities as an issue in Australia	Impact Theme 2: Behavioural change – increasing student and stakeholder activism around sexual violence in Australian university environments	Impact Theme 3: Institutional change – encouraging reforms in how universities, residential colleges and governments manage and prevent sexual violence in Australian university environments
University students			
University faculty			
Parents			
Alumni			
University administrators			
Residential college staff			
Residential college administrators			
Media			
Government Ministers and decision makers			



KEY THEMES

At the time of the Good Pitch event in September 2015, the THGAP campaign was conceived as a 10 point strategy:

1. To proactively engage a coalition of “leaders” in the key universities and residential colleges across Australia, who are prepared to publicly support this initiative.
2. To create an initial coalition of partners at the Good Pitch event, who will publicly provide leadership, visibility, credibility and momentum to the campaign.
3. To convene this coalition (approximately 20-25 participants) for a two day residential working party at the Shark Island Institute, Kangaroo Valley to implement the initial phase of the campaign.
4. To create a national communication strategy and to provide communication and media resources for all university campuses, in advance of the film and campaign release in February 2016.
5. To immediately engage the AHRCentre at UNSW in collaboration with the Australian Human Rights Commission, to adapt the ADFA Survey for specific use in a university and residential college context across Australia.
6. To engage the AHRCentre on a multi-year basis, to create a comprehensive package of policies, frameworks for reporting, protocols and procedures – initially for UNSW, and then shared philanthropically as an open resource for the entire sector. The AHRCentre will work with all universities across Australia under a multi-year commitment to the Project.
7. To engage (or commission) the Australian Human Rights Commission to strategically advise and liaise initially with the Go8, acting as the independent body for all survey data analysis.
8. To create comprehensive education and training packages (including consent training) to accompany the public release of *The Hunting Ground* documentary, in cinemas, at community screenings and on campuses









across Australia, during the week beginning 24 February 2016 (Orientation Week).

9. To support and encourage the activities of each individual campaign and response by universities, colleges and student bodies at a local level, in addition to the national campaign.

10. To set in place a 3-5 year implementation plan, through the Project's Impact Producer and team, for connecting, engaging, monitoring, educating, reporting, and measuring impact, to effect lasting change on campuses across Australia.

CAMPAIGN STREAMS

Following the Good Pitch event and consultations with key stakeholders, the strategy was consolidated into five core streams with an additional three activities added over the next 18 - 24 months.

1	CAMPUS SCREENINGS	
2	STUDENT SURVEY	
3	POLICIES, PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES	
4	CONSENT & SEXUAL ETHICS TRAINING	
5	SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION TRAINING	
6	MEDIA GOOD PRACTICE FACTSHEETS	
7	COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGNING	
8	EVALUATION	

1. CAMPUS SCREENINGS

THGAP's first stream was to collaborate with Australian distributor Madman Entertainment to offer supported campus screenings of *The Hunting Ground* to encourage conversations about the subjects and experiences portrayed in the documentary and how they related to the Australian context.

2. STUDENT SURVEY

Recognising the absence of comprehensive independent statistical information specifically about the incidence of sexual assault, sexual threats and sexual harassment on Australian universities, THGAP's second campaign theme was to facilitate the development of an independent survey on the prevalence, reporting experiences and responses to sexual violence in Australian university settings. The aim was to fill the information gap for the community and provide Australian universities with the knowledge required to better understand, respond to and prevent sexual violence.

3. POLICIES, PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES

A key theme explored in *The Hunting Ground* was the devastating long-term impact that sexual violence had when the response to a disclosure was inappropriate or inadequate. To address these issues, THGAP commissioned the AHRCentre to implement the second component of the *Strengthening Australian University Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment Project* – the Policies, Protocols and Procedures Project, providing a blueprint of good practice for the sector.

4. CONSENT & SEXUAL ETHICS TRAINING

The fourth stream of THGAP's campaign strategy was preventative in nature, and involved the development of education materials and programs to better equip university students and staff to respond to sexual violence. THGAP commissioned the Full Stop Foundation to adapt existing ethics and consent training programs to the Australian university context.

5. SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION TRAINING

THGAP partnered with Fair Agenda to support the first ever record of the quantity and quality of sexual violence prevention training provided by university residential colleges.

6. MEDIA GOOD PRACTICE FACTSHEETS

With the Full Stop Foundation, THGAP support the Full Stop Foundation Ambassador and journalist Nina Funnell to produce three factsheets – for victim-survivors, student representatives and journalists to improve media coverage of sexual assault and harassment in Australian universities.

7. COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGNING

Following the release of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground: A Good Practice Guide for Australian Universities* in August 2017 the THGAP focused on consolidating the work of the campaign through:

- a. monitoring of university and residential responses to the two reports
- b. contributing to national policy development through submissions to TEQSA regarding their draft Guidance Notes under the Threshold Standards
- c. collaboratively campaigning with Fair Agenda, EROC Australia and NUS for the establishment of an independent, expert-led national Taskforce to drive improvements in the management and prevention of sexual violence by Australian higher education providers
- d. developing a better understanding of existing legislative and regulative processes utilising Senate Estimates processes in the Federal Parliament
- e. mentoring EROC Australia in their transition to incorporation
- f. transitioning THGAP into ongoing projects led by THGAP partners Fair Agenda and EROC Australia

8. EVALUATION

The fifth stream of THGAP's campaign strategy was to document the THGAP campaign and assess its impact.

KEY ACTIVITIES

To deliver the THGAP Campaign Strategy, the THGAP impact team undertook a wide range of activities within these eight streams.

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

In May 2015, Allison Henry was engaged by the Good Pitch team to undertake some initial research on the incidence of sexual violence in Australian higher education institutions. This initial research quickly indicated that while there were many issues raised by *The Hunting Ground* that were relevant in an Australian context, there was a significant data gap about the Australian experience.

PARTNER AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The THGAP team commenced its partner and stakeholder engagement ahead of the Good Pitch event in September 2015 with preview screenings for Sydney based Vice-Chancellors and senior staff from the University of NSW and University of Sydney. A preview screening with producer Amy Ziering was also held in Melbourne in June 2015.

The team were initially focused on identifying individuals who had existing linkages with the issue of sexual violence in university contexts, and representatives of key stakeholder groups. Notably, initial efforts to engage the Group of Eight universities were unsuccessful so the team's focus turned to Universities Australia, the peak body for all 39 of Australia's universities.

At the Good Pitch event, in conversation about the possibilities that *The Hunting Ground* presented in Australia, were:

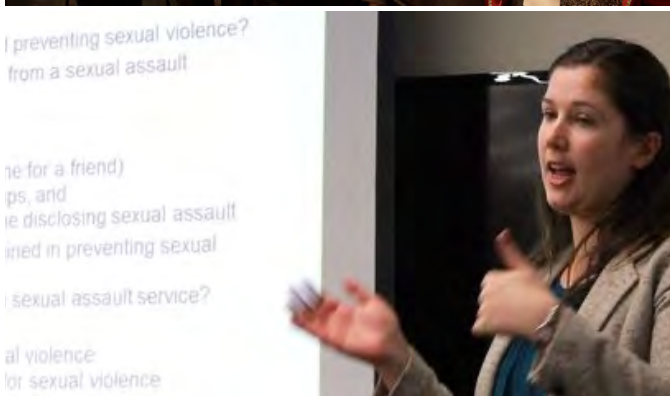
- Elizabeth Broderick
(Former Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission)
- Dr. Michael Spence
(Vice-Chancellor & Principal, University of Sydney)
- Dr. Damian Powell
(Principal, Janet Clarke Hall, University of Melbourne)

- Hannah Smith
(2015 National Education Officer, National Union of Students)
- Anne-Marie Lansdown
(Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Universities Australia)
- Professor Andrea Durbach
(Director, Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW)
- Adair Donaldson
(Shine Lawyers and Consent Trainer)
- Anna Kaplan
(Madman Entertainment, distributor)



Following the Good Pitch event, relationships with partners and stakeholders developed organically during each phase, and over the course of the THGAP campaign. Alongside the Good Pitch Australia team led by Ian Darling, a core THGAP working group guided and supported the THGAP team throughout the campaign and included:

- Professor Andrea Durbach (Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW)
- Dr. Damian Powell (Principal, Janet Clarke Hall, University of Melbourne)
- Karen Willis AO (Executive Officer, Rape & Domestic Violence Australia)
- Professor Moira Carmody (Full Stop Foundation)
- Sharna Bremner (Founder & Director, EROC Australia)
- Renee Carr (Executive Director, Fair Agenda)



From 2015-2018 THGAP worked closely with four consecutive National Women's Officers of the National Union of Students, who also sat on the working group: Rose Steele (2015), Heidi La Paglia (2016), Abby Stapleton (2017) and Kate Crossin (2018). NUS Presidents Sophie Johnstone (2017) and Mark Pace (2018) were also involved with the broader campaign.

Over the course of the THGAP campaign – and particularly during the campus screening phase – the THGAP team liaised with a large number of survivors, advocates, students, student leaders and staff at individual universities and residential colleges around Australia. The team also drew on the expertise of staff from sexual assault and counselling services and local police services in various communities.

In pursuing THGAP's eight campaign themes, THGAP collaborated with a range of organisations and individuals:

CAMPAIGN STREAM	KEY DELIVERY PARTNERS
1. CAMPUS SCREENINGS	Madman Entertainment National Union of Students Universities Australia
2. STUDENT SURVEY	Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW Australian Human Rights Commission
3. POLICIES, PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES	Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW
4. CONSENT & SEXUAL ETHICS TRAINING	Full Stop Foundation
5. SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION TRAINING	Fair Agenda
6. MEDIA GOOD PRACTICE FACTSHEETS	Full Stop Foundation Journalist survivor advocate Nina Funnell
7. COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGNING	Fair Agenda End Rape on Campus National Union of Students
8. EVALUATION	

In addition to the organisations represented on the THGAP working group, and the THGAP delivery partners, the THGAP team regularly shared information and collaborated on various activities with National Association of Australian University Colleges, Network of Women Students Australia, University Colleges Australia and White Ribbon Australia.

In the consolidation phase of the campaign, the THGAP team liaised regularly with the office of the then Minister for Education and Training, The Hon Simon Birmingham; the office of the then Shadow Minister for Education and Training, The Hon Tanya Plibersek; and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), Australia's independent national quality assurance and regulatory agency for higher education.

DEVELOPMENT OF MATERIALS AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT SCREENINGS AND ENCOURAGE ACTIVISM

To support campus and community screenings, and encourage activism to combat sexual violence in Australian universities, the THGAP team developed a range of publications:



A digital **Screening Toolkit** for screening hosts, including background information about the film and tips for a successful screening of *The Hunting Ground* including event logistics, marketing the event and evaluation. The Toolkit was supported by a number of digital screening tools for screening hosts including an event 'run-sheet', digital artwork for promotion of screenings and an on-screen slide for information about local support services.

A **Post-Screening Discussion Guide**, providing campus hosts with guidance around managing audience reactions to the film and tips for moderating panel discussions following screenings, with suggested discussion questions. The guide highlighted the trigger warning at the commencement of the film and recommended the provision of contact information for support services where viewers distressed by the film could seek assistance.



A three-page **Background briefing** on *The Australian Context*, outlining available information about sexual violence in Australian universities.

An **Action Toolkit** to empower key audiences, including students, parents, alumni, faculty, advisors and administrators, to take action to combat sexual violence in Australian universities. Released in June 2017 to mark the ABC broadcast of *The Hunting Ground*, the toolkit included background to the film, contextual information around the situation in Australia, and suggestions for how different audiences could get involved in the campaign for Australian universities to be free of sexual violence.

For students, there are excerpts from the Full Stop Foundation's *Sex, Safety & Respect* program around consent and bystander skills – two key issues consistently raised in campus screenings. The Toolkit includes also included a Student Campus Environmental Scan – for students to consider how effective their university is in responding to, and helping end, sexual violence – as well as resources and contacts for students and others to seek out further information.



PREVIEW SCREENINGS

The Hunting Ground Australia Project reached out to Universities Australia, the peak body for Australia's university sector, and with UA's assistance a series of 25 staff previews were held with university staff around Australia in late 2015 and early 2016. The preview screenings and briefings were intended to provide an opportunity for university staff to preview the film, to help allay any concerns around the use of the film in an Australian context and bring university staff into the conversation before the campus screening program started.

Previews were attended by a broad range of university staff, including representatives from Vice-Chancellors' offices, university security departments, counselling teams, university student services departments, media teams, student unions and residential colleges and were followed with Q&A sessions with members of the THGAP team.

CAMPUS SCREENINGS

The Australian campus screening program launched on 22 February 2016, utilising the 58 minute education version of the film. THGAP was able to offer a free of charge event screening with Q&A to every university thanks to funds raised at Good Pitch, and subsidised ongoing use licenses courtesy of Madman Entertainment.

Campus screenings were supported by a trigger warning, the attendance of on-site counsellors and the provision of information about assistance that staff and students could access – both on campus and in their local communities. Screenings were usually supported by an interactive Q&A session following the documentary, with panellists including survivors, student representatives, sexual assault specialists, trauma support, university staff, local police and educators.

Over the course of the THGAP campaign, the THGAP team supported more than 70 campus and residential college screenings across Australia, providing an opportunity for thousands of Australian university staff and students to see and consider the documentary.

Through UA, the THGAP team liaised with delegates appointed by university Vice-Chancellors to encourage universities to pick up multi-year and multi-campus licensing packages. Within the THGAP team,

Madman Entertainment led liaison with universities and residential colleges, and had ongoing engagement with 33 of the 39 total universities nationally, as well as a number of residential colleges. Only one university formally declined the offer of a free “event screening” of *The Hunting Ground*.



CAMPUS SCREENINGS

SOME 20 UNIVERSITIES PURCHASED LICENCE PACKAGES:

- LaTrobe University (3-year package)
- University of Canberra (3-year package)
- Australian National University (3-year package)
- University of Newcastle (3-year package)
- University of Melbourne (3-year package)
- Deakin University (3-year package)
- Western Sydney University (3-year package)
- Monash University (3-year package)
- Griffith University (1-year package)
- University of New South Wales (1-year package)
- Southern Cross University (1 screening x 5 campuses)
- Edith Cowan University (1 screening x 3 campuses)
- Victoria University (1 screening x 4 campuses)
- Curtin University (1-year package x 1 campus / single screening x 1 campus)
- Macquarie University (1-year package)
- University of New England (3-year package)
- Swinburne University (1 screening x 3 campuses)
- Charles Sturt University (Event screening & Digital x 3 campuses)
- University of Western Australia Student Guild (1 year package x 1 campus)
- Western Sydney University (3 year package x 8 campuses)
- Charles Darwin University (1 year package x 3 campuses plus online)

10 UNIVERSITIES OPTED FOR THE FREE EVENT SCREENINGS, SUPPORTED BY PHILANTHROPIC RESOURCES MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH GOOD PITCH:

- University of Adelaide
- University of Technology Sydney
- University of South Australia
- University of Queensland
- Queensland University of Technology
- RMIT University
- University of Wollongong
- Flinders University
- University of Sunshine Coast

SIX CAMPUS SCREENINGS WERE INDEPENDENTLY HOSTED BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES, STUDENT UNIONS AND STAFF REPRESENTATIVES:

- University of Sydney (Wom*n's Collective hosting screening) x 2 events
- University of Sydney (Student-led screening for Big Sky Film Festival)
- University of Tasmania (Student-union hosting screening)
- University of Melbourne (University of Melbourne Student Union)
- University of Queensland (UQ Student Union)
- James Cook University (NTEU JCU Branch) x 2 campuses

SEVERAL RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES ALSO PURCHASED LICENCE PACKAGES:

- The Women's College, University of Sydney (purchased a 1-year package)
- Janet Clarke Hall, University of Melbourne (covered by 3-year campus package)
- Whitley College, University of Melbourne (covered by 3-year campus package)
- Trinity College, University of Melbourne (covered by 3-year campus package)
- Queens College, University of Melbourne (covered by 3-year campus package)
- St Leo's College, University of Queensland (purchased 1 year licence)

CONFERENCE SCREENINGS

In support of the broader campaign, the THGAP team led a number of conference screenings and panel discussions, including:

- Australia New Zealand Student Services Conference – Hobart, 8 December 2015
- Australasian Association of College and University Housing Officers Conference – Sydney, 22 April 2015
- National Union of Students Education Conference – Sydney, 6 July 2016
- National Association of Australian University Colleges National Conference – Sydney, 8 July 2016
- Network of Women Students Australia's (NOWSA) Annual Conference – Sydney, 13 July 2016
- National Association of Australian University Colleges National Conference – Melbourne, 5 July 2017

Members of THGAP team and working group also attended and participated in the Universities Australia conference in Canberra on 9 March 2016, which included a session on 'Best practices in response to sexual violence on campus'.



COMMUNITY SCREENINGS

The THGAP team also led a number of cinema screenings co-presented with community partners, showing the 103 minute version of the film.

These included:

- Australian International Documentary Conference screening at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) – Melbourne, 1 March 2016
- Women's Centre for Health Matters and Canberra Rape Crisis Centre screening at National Film & Sound Archive – Canberra, 3 March 2016
- Fair Agenda screening at Hoyts EQ – Sydney, 21 April 2016
- Victorian Women's Trust screening at Cinema Nova – Melbourne, 28 April 2016
- Sydney Women's Fund screening at Eternity Theatre – Sydney, 20 July 2016



COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF BASELINE DATA

THGAP instigated an independent survey to provide the Australian community with the robust independent evidence base required to inform good practice and to hold institutions to account.

In May 2015 the Caledonia Foundation, in support of THGAP, engaged the Australian Human Rights Centre (AHRCentre) at UNSW (now the Australian Human Rights Institute) to implement the *Strengthening Australian University Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment Project*. The project had two components: the design of a student survey, the Australian Universities' Sexual Assault and Harassment Survey, later implemented in collaboration with the Australian Human Rights Commission; and the development of a good practice policies and procedure report for use and adaptation by Australian universities.

Following a significant financial investment by Universities Australia the survey expanded to include all 39 Australian universities. Launched in August 2016, the national university student survey was complemented by an open submission process, with THGAP providing a submission to the Commission in January 2017.

The national survey was administered by Roy Morgan Research on behalf of the Commission and distributed online to a stratified sample of 319,252 students across 39 universities. A total of 30,930 responses were received, representing an overall response of 9.7% of the sample.

The results of the survey and submission process were published in the Commission's landmark report *Change the Course: National report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities*,⁷ released on 1 August 2017. According to the Commission's report:

The National Survey provides the first nationally representative data on students' experiences of sexual assault and sexual harassment at university, and collected information about:

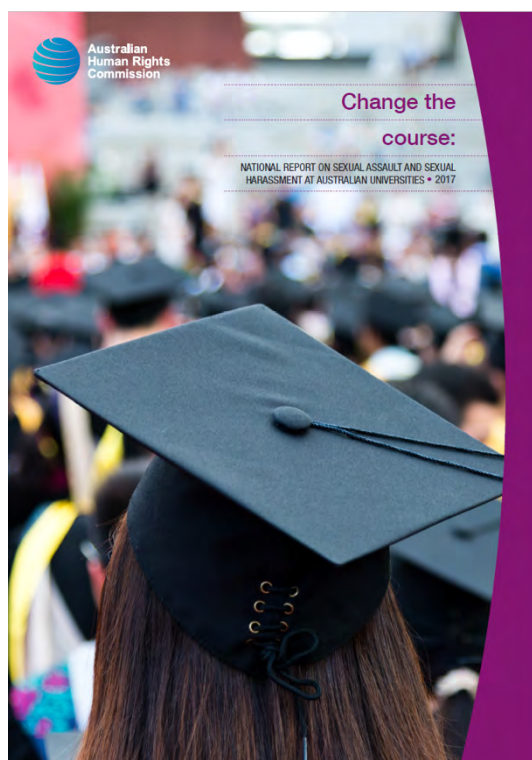
- *whether students had experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment in university settings in 2015 and/or 2016*

⁷ See <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/projects/university-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment-project>

- *where students experienced sexual assault and sexual harassment in university settings*
- *the perpetrators of sexual assault and sexual harassment*
- *reporting of sexual assault and sexual harassment, and*
- *students' recommendations for change.*⁸

The Commission's *Change the Course* report contained nine recommendations for universities and residential colleges, covering the themes of:

- Leadership and governance;
- Changing attitudes and behaviours;
- University responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment;
- Monitoring and evaluation; and
- Residential colleges and university residences.



⁸ See <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/projects/university-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment-project>, p.22.



30,000+
students
responded

39 Australian
universities
represented

www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport



One in five **(21%)**
students were
sexually harassed.

www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport



**Women were
three times as
likely as men**
to have been
sexually assaulted.

**Women were
almost twice as
likely as men**
to have been
sexually harassed.

www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport



1.6% of
students were
sexually
assaulted.

www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport



51% of
students who
were sexually
assaulted
knew some
or all of the
perpetrators.

www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport



87% of students
who were sexually
assaulted at
university did not
make a formal
report or complaint
to their university.

www.humanrights.gov.au/universityreport

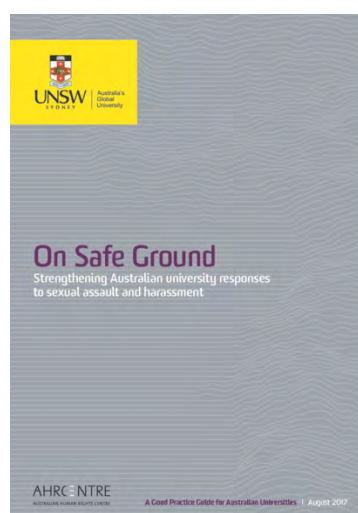


DEVELOPMENT OF A GOOD PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

THGAP engaged Professor Andrea Durbach and the AHRCentre at UNSW to develop a good practice framework for Australian universities as part of the *Strengthening Australian University Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment Project*.

Building on research undertaken by the NUS, the Centre analysed the *Change the Course* survey data and undertook extensive comparative international research to develop a model protocol and policy framework for use and adaptation across Australia's university sector.

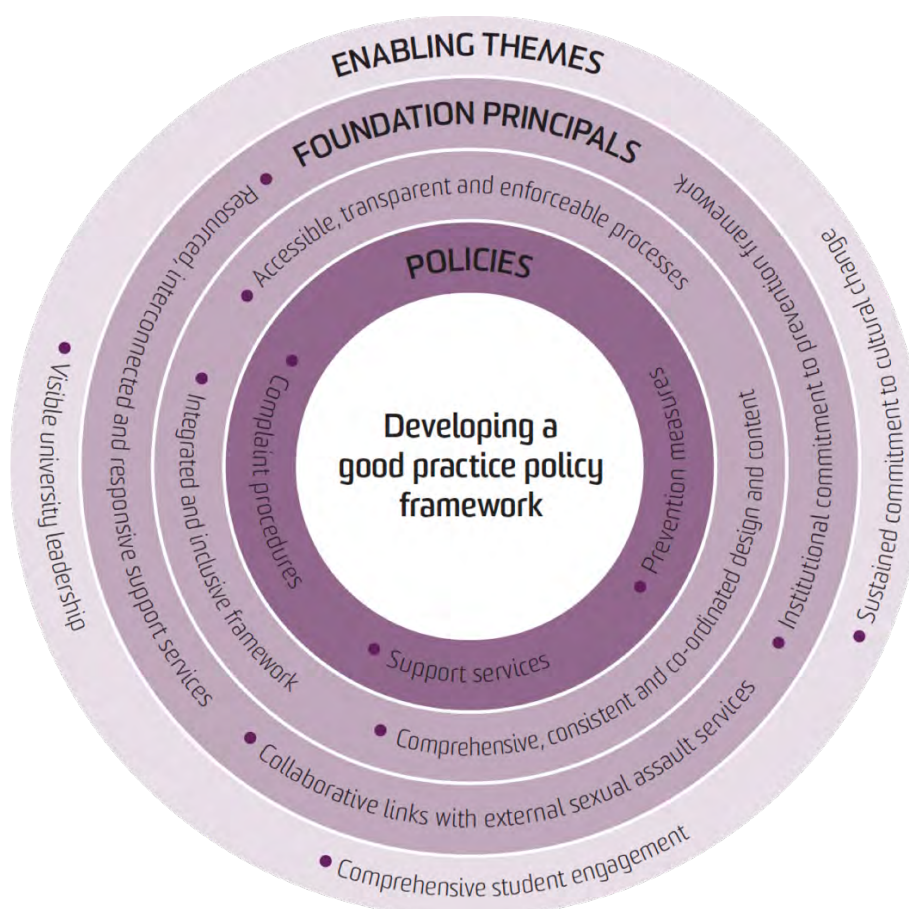
The project focused on the development of effective and appropriate institutional responses to sexual assault and harassment in Australian universities, with particular attention on the needs of women, LGBTIQ+ students and international students.



The AHRCentre's report *On Safe Ground: A Good Practice Guide for Australian Universities*⁹ was released on 3 August 2017. Focused on the student voice and providing detailed practical options for universities, the report highlighted six foundational principles to inform Australian university policies and procedures on sexual assault and harassment, to ensure they are transparent and accessible to all students and are enforceable via consistently applied, robust disciplinary procedures and the appropriate application of effective sanctions. The report asserted that visible university leadership, comprehensive student engagement, and a sustained commitment to cultural change were critical enablers for

⁹ See <https://www.humanrights.unsw.edu.au/research/past/strengthening-australian-university-responses-sexual-assault-and-harassment>

the effective application of university sexual assault and harassment policies and procedures.



The *On Safe Ground* report included a suite of recommendations to holistically address sexual assault and harassment in Australian universities. The 18 recommendations were directed at Federal and State / Territory Governments, the national higher education regulator, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), Universities Australia, individual universities and residential colleges and covered systemic issues, institutional responses, student support services and prevention strategies and provided a holistic response to tackling sexual violence at Australian universities.

Accompanying *On Safe Ground*, the AHRCentre released *Local Perspectives: A case study on responses to sexual violence in a university setting* on the same day. The companion report was a small case study undertaken at UNSW Sydney (UNSW), based on an initial review of UNSW's policies and confidential interviews with diverse stakeholders who were involved in and/or responsible for responding to reports of sexual violence by members of the UNSW community.



In August 2018, one year after the release of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, the *On Safe Ground* student resource was created for students and staff to continue conversations about how we should respond to and prevent gendered violence on university campuses.¹⁰

The animation from Deloitte Digital was drawn around a poem (writer Ann Luff) written following extensive student conversation and consultation around experiences of assault and the aftermath, the realities of contradictory messaging around sexuality and the varied experiences of being on university campus.

*Sexual assault never happens as an isolated event.
It's not about short skirts,
or alcohol,
or defining consent.
It doesn't discriminate on sexuality,
Or gender,
Or race.
It's known by many forms, but it doesn't have a face.*

*It's not about fighting off strange figures hiding in the dark.
It's about calling out harmful behaviour,
When someone makes a 'harmless' remark.*

*Because sexual assault is about power. Big structures and small moments
that govern us all.
But it's time to change the conversation,
And find safe ground for all.*

¹⁰ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2xAiDbkiY>

DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF CONSENT, SEXUAL ETHICS AND PREVENTION TRAINING PROGRAMS

To better equip university students and staff to respond to sexual violence, THGAP in early 2016 engaged the Full Stop Foundation, led by the late Professor Moira Carmody and Karen Willis OAM, to adapt existing ethics and consent training programs to the Australian university context.

The *Sex, Safety & Respect* program and training materials¹¹ comprised materials around healthy relationships, sexual ethics, consent and bystander strategies.

The Full Stop Foundation subsequently delivered their workshops at universities and residential colleges across Australia.



SUPPORT FOR STUDENT AND SURVIVOR ADVOCACY

The THGAP team was committed to elevating and empowering the voices of survivors and student leaders, by ensuring representation on post screening panels and in advocacy activities, as well as providing targeted resources such as the Action Toolkit.

¹¹ See <http://www.thehuntinggroundaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/THGAP-Sex-Safety-and-Respect-Training-Resources-FINAL.pdf>



Over the course of the campaign, the THGAP team collaborated with student leaders and provided mentoring to staff of End Rape on Campus Australia, particularly assisting in the preparation of their incorporation.

STUDENT LEADER AND MEDIA FACTSHEETS

On the eve of the release of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports in August 2017 THGAP team anticipated a significant increase in media attention around the issue of campus sexual violence. With the Full Stop Foundation, THGAP supported journalist Nina Funnell to produce three factsheets – targeted at victim-survivors, student representatives and journalists – to improve media coverage of sexual assault and harassment in Australian universities. The factsheets were released on the eve of the August 2017 reports and promoted through THGAP’s website, Universities Australia’s website, Facebook and through student representative networks.



ENGAGEMENT WITH UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS

To facilitate the campus screening program, the THGAP team initially reached out to individual university staff, but were surprised to discover how differently each university managed issues of sexual violence. In 2015 there was no standard approach across universities or, often, a single point of contact or responsibility within individual universities. The team were variously directed towards Vice-Chancellors' officers, university security departments, counselling teams, university student services departments, media teams, student unions and residential colleges.

Subsequently the team worked closely with Universities Australia to identify a delegate at each university, nominated by each Vice-Chancellor, to act as a contact person for THGAP at each university. With assistance from UA and these delegates, a series of staff previews were held around Australia in late 2015, and campus screenings commenced in February 2016.

University representatives – including Vice-Chancellors, various Deputy Vice-Chancellors, student service representatives, security and counselling staff – frequently participated in panel discussions following screenings of the documentary.

THGAP kept university administrators abreast of the Project's key activities, sending Vice-Chancellors the July 2016 and July 2017 Progress Reports. The team also wrote to all Vice-Chancellors following the release of the AHRC and AHRCentre reports in August 2017, to request information about each university's response to the report recommendations.

ENGAGEMENT WITH RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS

The THGAP team engaged with a number of residential college administrators, pursuing project contacts and enquiries from the residencies around screenings. On a number of occasions the team facilitated screenings with staff and students at colleges, and participated in training days.

The THGAP team sent the THGAP Progress Reports in July 2016 and July 2017 to residence contacts.



SURVEYS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION TRAINING PROVIDED BY RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

THGAP partnered with Fair Agenda to support the first ever record of the quantity and quality of sexual violence prevention training provided by university residential colleges.¹² Between 2016 and 2020 Fair Agenda regularly surveyed the more than 200 residential colleges across Australia about their provision of sexual violence prevention training to their staff and students. Fair Agenda collated and published responses from residential colleges on their website, and employed the results to generate media coverage.

¹² See http://www.fairagenda.org/residences_survey

RESULTS

DETAILED RESULTS

THE ISSUE

THE SURVEY

GET INVOLVED

New survey results: Which Uni residences are training to prevent sexual assault?

A 2017 study of sexual violence at Australian universities found that students living in university residences are more likely than other students to be sexually assaulted. It's one more reason residences should be doing everything possible to prevent sexual violence in their communities - including providing their students and staff with expert-led training in the area.

That's why Fair Agenda has contacted the 234 university residences across Australia with a survey asking what, if any, training they will provide to students and relevant staff in 2020. Find out which residences are training their students and staff in consent and preventing sexual violence using the arrows and search tools on the table below.

Use the arrows to scroll left and right

←

→

RESIDENCE*	WAWN PONDS ACCOMM	WARNAMBOOL ACCOMM	BURWOOD ACCOMM	GEELONG ACCOMM	BALLARAT RESIDENCES
UNIVERSITY	DEAKIN	DEAKIN	DEAKIN	DEAKIN	FED UNI
STATE	VIC	VIC	VIC	VIC	VIC
WILL ALL STUDENTS RECEIVE RELEVANT TRAINING?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WILL A SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICE BE INVOLVED IN STUDENT TRAINING?	?	?	?	?	✓
DOES THE TRAINING INCLUDE SEXUAL CONSENT TRAINING?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IS THE TRAINING PER STUDENT AT LEAST 2 HOURS?	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
WILL STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR RESIDENT WELFARE BE PROVIDED WITH RELEVANT TRAINING?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WILL A SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICE BE INVOLVED IN STAFF TRAINING?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DOES THAT TRAINING INCLUDE HOW TO RESPOND TO DISCLOSURES?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DOES THAT TRAINING INCLUDE HOW TO CREATE A ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

✓ YES

✗ PARTIAL YES

✖ NO

? UNKNOWN

□ DID NOT RESPOND

103

RESIDENCES WILL TRAIN ALL STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR RESIDENT WELFARE TO PREVENT & RESPOND TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE

FIND OUT WHICH: FAIRAGENDA.ORG/RESIDENCES_SURVEY

FAIR AGENDA

57

RESIDENCES WILL ENSURE A SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICE IS INVOLVED IN TRAINING STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR RESIDENT WELFARE

FIND OUT WHICH: FAIRAGENDA.ORG/RESIDENCES_SURVEY

FAIR AGENDA

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

WEBSITE

The THGAP team established a website, <http://www.thehuntinggroundaustralia.com.au>, in November 2015, and promoted it from the US website. The site included a trailer for the film and introductory and background information about *The Hunting Ground*, the filmmakers, survivors featured in the film and the impact strategy.

The website provided capacity for interested parties to register their interest in hosting a screening, listed upcoming screenings and had a map of universities participating in the campus screening program. Over time, impact resources such as the Post-screening Discussion Guide, Progress Reports and Action Toolkit were added to the “Resources” page on the site, and a page with contact details for support services was established. In addition, the website featured “Get Involved” and “Take Action” pages.

FACEBOOK

The THGAP Facebook page was established in January 2016 and relevant media articles and commentary were regularly posted. Interaction was strongest in the lead up to the survey launch and report launches, along with O-week activities. Media content sharing was strongest around campus activities on the east coast.

THGAP UPDATE REPORTS

To keep donors, partners, stakeholders and supporters informed of the development of the campaign, THGAP team produced two Progress Reports, in July 2016 and July 2017, that were distributed widely including to University Vice-Chancellors and relevant Federal and State and Territory Ministers.

MEDIA RELEASES

The THGAP team prepared and distributed a number of media releases throughout the campaign, including:

- *The Hunting Ground Australia Project Welcomes National Student Survey on Sexual Assault*, 23 August 2016
- *The Hunting Ground Australia Project Awarded Philanthropy Australia Gender-Wise Award*, 6 April 2017
- *The Hunting Ground to Screen on ABC2*, 7 June 2017
- *How to Talk About Sexual Assault – Factsheets for Journalists and Interviewees*, 31 July 2017
- *The Hunting Ground Australia Project welcomes Commission's report on university sexual violence*, 1 August 2017
- *On Safe Ground: a roadmap to tackle sexual violence at Australian universities*, 3 August 2017

The THGAP also issued several joint media releases with partner organisations EROC Australia, Fair Agenda and the National Union of Students, including:

- *Universities' plan silent on disciplining perpetrators; lacks adequate measures to accommodate affected students with their studies*, 1 August 2017
- *Broderick Review of USyd Residential Colleges*, 20 December 2017 (also with The University of Sydney SRC and The University of Sydney Women's Collective)
- *Leading advocates on university sexual violence call for Taskforce*, 22 February 2018
- *Government must act on sexual violence against international students*, 27 April 2018
- *Action on campus rape shelved in cabinet reshuffle*, 23 November 2018
- *Advocates applaud Labor commitment to university sexual violence Taskforce*, 30 November 2018

THE GUARDIAN PANEL, PODCAST AND VIDEO

To mark the ABC broadcast on 21 June 2017 of *The Hunting Ground*, *The Guardian*'s Gabrielle Jackson chaired a panel with students, campaigners and a representative from rape support services to explore the film's relevance to Australia, and discuss the Australian Human Rights Commission's national survey into sexual assault and harassment (released in August 2017). The panel was used in the production of a podcast and video which were made available and promoted through the THGAP website and Facebook page.

OPINION PIECES

THGAP Campaign Director Allison Henry had an opinion piece, 'Downplaying sexual assault to attack the Human Rights Commission is a new low', published in *The Guardian Australia* on 7 August 2017.

FACTSHEET FOR JOURNALISTS

As noted above, one of the three THGAP-supported factsheets was targeted at journalists, aimed at encouraging more sensitive and systemic media coverage of sexual assault and harassment in Australian universities.

“When journalists treat survivor stories with compassion, dignity and respect, they encourage others to do likewise.”

Professor Catharine Lumby
Reporting on Sexual Assault Within University Communities
Full Stop Foundation Fact Sheet

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

CORRESPONDENCE TO MINISTERS PROMOTING PROJECT

At the commencement of the campaign the THGAP team wrote to Federal and State and Territory Ministers in the Education and Women portfolios, outlining the background to and ambitions of the project. As noted above, relevant Federal and State and Territory Ministers were provided with THGAP Progress Reports in July 2016 and July 2017.

MONITORING UNIVERSITY AND RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE RESPONSES

Following the release of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports in August 2017, the THGAP team monitored university and residential college response to the *Change the Course* recommendations.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT: TASKFORCE CAMPAIGN

The THGAP team partnered with Fair Agenda, EROC Australia and NUS to develop a detailed policy proposal for the establishment of an independent, expert-led national Taskforce to track, assess and publicly report on university efforts to prevent and improve responses to sexual violence.

MINISTERIAL MEETINGS AND LIAISON

Throughout 2018, the four groups collaboratively campaigned for the establishment of the proposed Taskforce. This included joint meetings with then Minister for Education Simon Birmingham and then Shadow Minister for Education Tanya Plibersek, the office of subsequent Minister for Education Dan Tehan, in addition to considerable liaison with the Birmingham and Plibersek offices.

SUBMISSIONS

To support the broader policy objectives of the campaign, the THGAP team developed three submissions:

- *University Sexual Assault and Harassment Project*, Australian Human Rights Commission, January 2017
- *Draft Guidance Note: Wellbeing and Safety*, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, October 2017

- *Draft Guidance Note: Grievance and Complaint Handling*, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, January 2018

SENATE ESTIMATES

With our campaign partners the THGAP team worked with Senators offices to utilise Senate Estimates processes in the Federal Parliament to gain a better understanding of existing legislative and regulative processes, with questions particularly directed to the federal Department of Education and Training and TEQSA.

PRESENTATION TO TEQSA

In May 2018, representatives from THGAP and Fair Agenda presented to TEQSA staff on the issue of sexual violence in Australian university environments, their experiences working with universities and residential colleges in recent years and their views on the role of TEQSA in delivering real improvements for student safety.



Renee Carr and Allison Henry present to TEQSA staff

TIMELINE

27 FEB 2015

The Hunting Ground premieres in the United States.

JUN 2015

The Hunting Ground screens at the Sydney Film Festival.

2011

NUS Talk About It survey released.

2011

2015

MAY 2015

Initial research and project design undertaken by THGAP and the AHR Centre



AUG 2015

THGAP commissions the AHRCentre to implement the *Strengthening Australian University Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment Project*.

OCT 2015

THGAP commissions the FSF to adapt existing ethics and consent training programs to the Australian university context.

OCT 2015

The AHRCentre and the Commission discuss the possible scope and nature of the student survey, then commence discussions with UA with a view to surveying across all 39 Australian universities.

16 SEP 2015

Good Pitch² Australia at Sydney Opera House.

18 NOV 2015

University staff previews of *The Hunting Ground* commence.

SEP-OCT 2015

Initial discussions between THGAP and UA regarding campus screenings.

A vertical timeline for the year 2016, set against a blue background with a faint image of a person's face. The timeline is represented by a central vertical line with horizontal branches leading to event boxes. The boxes are white with black text, except for two which are purple with white text. The year '2016' is written in white on a purple bar that spans the width of the page.

FEB 2016

Seed funding agreement between THGAP and the Commission for survey finalised.

2 FEB 2016

Launch of 2015 NUS *Talk About It* survey.

22 FEB 2016

Campus screenings of *The Hunting Ground* at Australian universities commence.

4 MAR 2016

FSF training materials completed.

23 AUG 2016

Launch of Commission's *University Sexual Assault and Harassment Project*.

2016

FEB 2016

All 39 universities agree to participate in, and contribute funding to, the national university student survey of sexual assault and sexual harassment to be conducted by the Commission.

SEP 2016

Fair Agenda launches first university residential survey.

FEB 2016

The AHRCentre and the Commission establish a working group to assist with drafting the survey instrument.

21 SEP-9 DEC 2016

The Commission conducts the national student survey at all 39 universities in three waves.

JAN 2017

EROC Australia's *Connecting the dots: Understanding sexual assault in university communities* released.

1 AUG 2017

The Commission's national report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities, *Change the Course*, released.

3 AUG 2017

AHRCentre's good practice report on strengthening Australian university responses to sexual assault and harassment project, *On Safe Ground*, released.

APR 2017

The Caledonia Foundation awarded Philanthropy Australia's 2017 Gender Wise Philanthropy Award for Good Pitch's THGAP.

4 AUG 2017

TEQSA media release 'Sector guidance to ensure safe campuses' issued.

2017

JUN 2017

THGAP releases its *Action Toolkit*.

OCT 2017

Fair Agenda's second university residence survey commences.

21 JUN 2017

The Hunting Ground screens on ABC2.

DEC 2017

The Commission's *Audit of university responses to Change the Course report – Audit 2017* published

8 JAN 2018

TEQSA's *Guidance Note: Wellbeing and Safety* published.

1 AUG 2018

The Commission's *Audit of university responses to the Change the Course report Snapshot of Progress: August 2018* published.

26 FEB 2018

EROC Australia's *The Red Zone Report* released.

1 AUG 2018

Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships – by UA, National Tertiary Education Union, Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations Incorporated & Australian Council of Graduate Research – released.

2018

4 JUN 2018

TEQSA announces that, in response to reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities, wellbeing and safety standards will be assessed during all higher education renewal applications.

OCT 2018

Fair Agenda's third university residence survey commences.

20 JUL 2018

UA's *Guidelines for University Responses to Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment* released.

25 JAN 2019

TEQSA's *Report to the Minister for Education: Higher education sector response to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment*: An overview of Australian higher education provider responses to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment published.

9 JUL 2020

TEQSA's *Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector* published.

14 MAY 2019

The Commission's *Change the Course – 18 month milestone* published.

SEP–NOV 2021

Social Research Centre in partnership with RMIT's Associate Professor Anastasia Powell of RMIT University undertake second student survey.

2019

2020–2022

6 FEB 2019

UA's partnership with Our Watch and the Victorian Government to deliver Respect and Equality Program announced.

16 AUG 2019

UA announces next student survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment to run in 2020.

27 OCT 2020

The Commission's *Change the Course – 3 year milestone* published.

22 FEB 2019

TEQSA's *Guidance Note: Grievance and Complaint Handling* published.

OCT 2019

Fair Agenda's fourth university residence survey commences.

23 MAR 2022

2021 National Student Safety Survey results released.

In evaluating the THGAP Impact Strategy, a range of materials and information from the initiation of THGAP in 2015 until the completion of the evaluation in early 2023 were considered.

Firstly, a desktop review was undertaken of all documentation in establishing the project, and in developing, implementing and reporting on the Impact Strategy. This included:

- initial background research
- Good Pitch documentation
- regular THGAP partner updates
- THGAP's Screening Toolkit, Post-Screening Discussion Guide and Action Toolkit
- THGAP's July 2016 and July 2017 Progress Reports
- THGAP submissions to the AHRC and TEQSA
- project correspondence
- THGAP and joint media releases.

In addition, the four major products of THGAP were reviewed:

- Australian Human Rights Commission's *Change the Course: National report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities*
- Australian Human Rights Centre's *On Safe Ground: A Good Practice Guide for Australian Universities*
- Full Stop Foundation's *Sex, Safety & Respect* training materials and program
- Fair Agenda's online record of the quantity and quality of sexual violence prevention training provided by university residential colleges.

Secondly, THGAP screening data was examined, considering the number and location of screenings, the variety of hosts, and where possible the number of attendees. Feedback from screening hosts and audiences via post-screening surveys has been analysed, including data collected at preview screenings, and online surveys of key stakeholders and screening hosts undertaken for the purposes of this evaluation process. An analysis of questions asked by audiences at campus screenings Q&As was also considered.

Thirdly, student and advocate activism occurring alongside the documentary and impact strategy have been considered. Such initiatives included:

- the joint letter from 15 past and present W*mens Officers at the University of Sydney in August 2016
- the publication of EROC Australia's *Connecting the dots* report in January 2017 and *The Red Zone Report* in February 2018
- EROC Australia and NUS's May 2017 campaign for funding of a dedicated specialist counseling hotline for affected students
- the joint campaign in 2018 for an independent expert-led national Taskforce to provide oversight and accountability of university responses to campus sexual violence.

Fourthly, media coverage of *The Hunting Ground*, THGAP and the broader issue of sexual violence in Australian university contexts between 2015 and 2018 was collated and trends analysed.

Fifthly, online engagement with the project was considered, with audience interaction with the THGAP website, Facebook and online newsletters analysed.

Sixthly, institutional responses to the project and its major initiatives have been examined, including:

- University staff and student responses to screenings of *The Hunting Ground* including the launch of Universities Australia's *Respect.Now.Always* campaign in early 2016
- University responses to the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, including:
 - University media statements following the release of the reports in August 2017, and the subsequent introduction of new policies, procedures and training by universities to manage and prevent sexual violence within their institutions
 - Universities Australia's 10 Point Action Plan (August 2017)
 - Universities Australia's *Guidelines for University Responses to Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment* (July 2018)
 - Universities Australia, National Tertiary Education Union, Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations Incorporated and Australian Council of Graduate Research, *Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships* (August 2018)

- The National Student Safety Survey (NSSS), commissioned by Universities Australia (undertaken in 2021 with results published March 2021).
- Residential college responses to the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, including initiatives led by University Colleges Australia such as the Respectful Relations Response and Resources Advisory Group and individual residential college reviews.
- Government agency responses to the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, including:
 - AHRC's four reports tracking university responses, published in December 2017, August 2018, May 2019 and October 2020
 - TEQSA's Guidance Notes: *Wellbeing and Safety* (January 2018) and *Grievance and Complaint Handling* (February 2019)
 - TEQSA's *Report to the Minister for Education: Higher education sector response to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment: An overview of Australian higher education provider responses to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment* (January 2019)
 - TEQSA's *Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector* (July 2020)
 - TEQSA's oversight of university's management of sexual assault and sexual harassment, including its handling of complaints and registration assessments.
- Residential college responses to Fair Agenda's surveys of sexual violence prevention training.
- Political responses to the issue of sexual violence in Australian university contexts including commitments to establish an independent, expert-led Taskforce.

And ***finally***, this data has been scrutinised to evaluate the impact strategy against the impact objectives and campaign theory of change.

IMPACT THEME 1: CHANGING MINDS

Utilising the documentary to “start a conversation” and establish sexual violence at university environments as an issue in Australia.



IMPACT THEME 2: BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

Increasing student and stakeholder activism around sexual violence in Australian university environments.



IMPACT THEME 3: INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Encouraging reforms in how universities, residential colleges and governments manage and prevent sexual violence in Australian university environments.



IMPACT THEME 1: CHANGING MINDS

Utilising the documentary to “start a conversation” and establish sexual violence at university environments as an issue in Australia



INPUTS

- Background research
- Documentary film
- Philanthropic financial support for screening programs
- Materials and resources to support screenings
- Communication tools



ACTIVITIES

- Facilitate screenings followed by panel discussions featuring experts and key stakeholders – preview, campus, conference and community screenings supported by Screening Toolkit and Post-Screening Discussion Guide
- Develop Action Toolkit to mobilise audiences to take action
- Utilise communication tools to promote film and impact strategy
- Develop stakeholder partnerships and collaboration
- Provide seed funding for national student survey to collect independent baseline data
- Lobby Commonwealth and State and Territory Ministers



OUTPUTS

- Changes in audience knowledge and attitudes
- Shift in sentiment among university leaders
- Increased media reporting
- Shift in political commentary



IMPACT

- Greater community and sector awareness and understanding, resulting in open discussion around issue of sexual assault and harassment in Australian university environments
- Recognition of the need for institutional change to manage and prevent sexual violence in Australian university environments

OUTCOMES

CHANGES IN AUDIENCE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

When THGAP was established following the 2015 Good Pitch Australia event, the team wanted to utilise *The Hunting Ground* to “start a conversation” and establish that sexual violence at universities and residential colleges was an issue in Australia requiring sustained attention.

After years of activism by survivors, student leaders and sexual violence advocates, seeking to draw attention to the prevalence of campus sexual violence and calling for institutional accountability, consideration of these issues in Australia remained episodic, driven by ad hoc media reports, and with little recognition or interest among universities, residential colleges, the media or governments to deal with these incidents in a systemic manner.

Over the course of THGAP’s campaign, attitudes shifted amongst university and residential colleges leaders, the media and governments, as well as, arguably, amongst the general Australian community.

These attitudinal shifts were first evident in audience responses to the film and THGAP.

STAFF PREVIEWS

Initial staff preview screenings of *The Hunting Ground* in Australia commenced in late 2015, including at the Australia and New Zealand Student Services Association (ANZSSA) conference in Hobart in December 2015. Following the screening and an introductory presentation, participants at the session – including support services such as health and counselling, student advisers, disability services, career development services, housing and accommodation services, spiritual and pastoral care and student welfare supports – were invited to complete a feedback form about the film and the proposed THGAP’s campaign. Mixed views were expressed, including concerns about using *The Hunting Ground* in Australia:

I'm worried, given the lack of charges in the documentary, that perpetrators might see this as reinforcement – I can do this and get away with it.

...concerned that some might interpret the message as don't inform the uni re sexual assault.

I think we need Aust stats before reviewing the film's use or screening this film to minimise denial (if indeed survey results are consistent).

I'm not sure this is the best film to start a conversation about sexual assault at university.

Other staff were more positive about the potential impact of the documentary:

It is very relevant. We are not that far behind the US and sprinting in their direction.

Very confronting – but its undeniable, sexual assaults do take place and it remains relevant in the Australian university environment, perhaps more so in university housing.

While cultural (fraternity) issues not matched here in Australia, domestic / sexual violence is a well-known problem. Protective administrations in the US linked to their system – here in AUS, more likely to be passive avoidance rather than active suppression.

It is so powerful. It's important to insist that it does happen here and that the denying will come unless we are courageous enough to act now.

If this is part of a national, unified approach, no one can ignore the elephant in the room.

Definitely a topic that requires more visibility.

I think everyone knows that sexual assault takes place on campus, but we turn a blind eye.

I think the film will definitely speak to an Australian evidence and university context.

I think the film ultimately is a tool to start a conversation.

At subsequent preview screenings the THGAP team regularly encountered strong resistance from some university staff, particularly around *The Hunting Ground* being an American film. There were suggestions that the contextual differences between the US and Australia rendered the documentary irrelevant to Australian universities. Notably, these assertions were virtually always challenged by other staff in the audience who most frequently asserted along the lines that staff “were kidding themselves if they thought this wasn’t happening in Australia.”

"The screenings were able to give people the opportunity to say 'actually, this is a problem that happens here' and then to open those conversations about what the impact of those problems is on individual student survivors."

Sharna Bremner, End Rape on Campus Australia

STUDENT RESPONSES AT CAMPUS SCREENINGS

Students, particularly female students, dominated the audiences at campus screenings of *The Hunting Ground* when they commenced in February 2016. Students in the audience were provided an opportunity to ask questions of panellists following screenings, with the THGAP team tracking these questions.

It was clear in the questions that students asked that they largely already accepted the prevalence of sexual violence in the university environment in Australia, and were eager to clarify and improve university and college responses.

Several themes emerged in student questions:

Institutional

- Students were keen to understand their university's policies and procedures (where they could find information; point of contact / responsibility within the university; concerns about confidentiality after a disclosure / report and around survivors being kept informed by the university of how their complaint was being dealt with) as well as the number of reported incidents and university responses to those reports (e.g. disciplinary measures actioned).
- What was known of proportion of perpetrators who were staff, and what disciplinary measures were in place for staff perpetrators.
- How were repeated incidents / reports treated by the university / residential college.
- What particular support was available to support international students and LGBTQI students.
- Whether universities in Australia had the same central reporting requirements as shown in *The Hunting Ground*, i.e. Title IX.
- How to focus on prevention and bring about cultural change in universities, and what preventative measures were in place across the university to tackle sexual violence.
- How to prevent the "lockdown" mentality within university administrations and leadership.
- What connections there were between campus and community agencies, to help with longer-term provision of information and assistance.

Reporting

- From a legal point of view, how to reduce / stop false reports.
- From a forensic point of view, the timeframes for collection of particular kinds of evidence.
- What proportion of reported cases went forward (i.e. to court and conviction).
- What was the statute of limitations on reporting, and on compensation.

Consent

- The need for greater training around issues of consent.
- What constituted consent in particular jurisdictions (e.g. does consent have to always be verbal, impact of intoxication on consent, how to ensure consent (“how to do it”))

Perpetrators

- What was being done to challenge the behaviour of perpetrators, educate perpetrators around consent.
- How to empower men to call out poor behaviour.

Disclosures

- The need for greater staff and student leader training around supporting survivors and responding appropriately.
- How to react if a friend or peer discloses.

Victim blaming

- How to stop victim blaming.

Bystanders

- The need for greater training around bystander strategies.
- What to do if you’re a bystander.

Student involvement

- Campaigns and actions that students could get involved in.

OBSERVATIONS FROM *THE HUNTING GROUND* SCREENINGS AT CONFERENCES

The Hunting Ground was screened at a number of student and student housing conferences. Reviewing the discussions following the screenings, it was evident that many student survivors had similar unsatisfactory experiences when reporting to their institutions, that victim blaming remained prevalent across the sector, and that most staff had little training in this area.

Student conferences particularly revealed that student leaders and leadership groups were keen to have robust procedures in place so that student turnover was not seen as a way of 'dealing with the issue' in residences. Student leaders also noted that the cyclical nature of student enrolments meant that perpetrators / survivors usually transitioned through over the course of one to two years.

STAFF RESPONSES AT CAMPUS SCREENINGS

The responses of many university staff during campus screenings throughout 2016 suggested a clear contrast with students, in their awareness and attitudes towards campus sexual violence.

University Vice-Chancellors and other senior staff (including various Deputy Vice-Chancellors, student service representatives, security and counselling staff) frequently participated in panel discussions, usually moderated by a THGAP team member, following screenings of the documentary.

THGAP team members tracked these contributions at campus screenings. Most, but not all, university representatives participating in panel discussions were prepared to share statistics with the audience about reported incidents of sexual violence at their institution. Those who resisted were usually strongly pressured by students in the audience. Some university representatives openly recognised that the statistics they offered were likely to be affected by a significant level of under-reporting. On a number of occasions, when university representatives attempted to downplay the extent of sexual violence at their institution, representatives from local sexual assault services countered, stating that universities were usually unaware of the number of their students they assisted. Occasionally local police also provided sobering statistics about the extent of reported sexual violence in the community where the university was located.

While many university representatives were well informed about their policies and procedures, a number demonstrated a concerning lack of familiarity with existing policies and protocols and how they operated from their students' perspective. At one screening a Vice Chancellor spent most of the panel discussion time insisting that an assistance hotline and reporting website operated a particular way before being corrected by his own staff, who supported the critical comments being offered by students in the audience.

There was a tendency among a significant proportion of university representatives, and particularly among security staff, to conceptualise sexual violence as a police matter. On a number of occasions during panel discussions university representatives emphasised the need to promptly involve police, while representatives from sexual assault services always stressed that reporting to police was one of a range of measures available to students. Alongside this emphasis on police reporting was a general reluctance to consider university disciplinary measures as an appropriate course of action, particularly in situations where there was no police report or court process in play. Many university representatives commented in panel discussions on the 'grey area' experienced by universities in responding to allegations of sexual misconduct.

At a number of screenings university representatives were asked about residential colleges associated with their university, with students in the audience often highlighting concerning behaviour and poor institutional responses. A number of university representatives, including at least one Vice Chancellor, rejected any capacity to impact on the operations of residential colleges associated with their university, stressing that they were independent entities that the university could not direct or control.

CAMPUS SCREENINGS

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

La Trobe University in Victoria was one of the most actively engaged universities following the launch of THGAP, in 2016 hosting nine screenings of *The Hunting Ground* across six campuses. In 2016 Professor John Dewar, Vice Chancellor of La Trobe, reflected on responses to the film:

The confronting nature of the film has been challenging for people but piqued an interest in how this issue translates in an Australian context. As the lights were raised there was a general look on the faces of the audience – one of shock and dismay... The genuine emotion of women and men sharing their stories, survivors as well as advocates, was incredibly moving. The post-screening questions ranged from what the statistics are in Australia and La Trobe around sexual violence, to legislative obligations for reporting and how to seek support for people affected by violence.

SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY

Southern Cross University (SCU) screened *The Hunting Ground* at its Lismore, Gold Coast, Coffs Harbour, Sydney and Melbourne campuses in early 2016. Professor Andrew McAuley, SCU's Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), led the screenings and panel discussions following, and reported good attendances and positive responses across all campuses. In 2017, Professor McAuley reported that SCU had built on the issues raised by *The Hunting Ground* screenings, and closely examined issues around student safety:

The Hunting Ground screenings and panel discussions stimulated thinking around the wider context of student wellbeing. It made SCU think about our Unibar and how it operates, the kind of events it hosts, and services provided.

SHIFT IN SENTIMENT AMONG UNIVERSITY LEADERS

Over the course of 2016, as the campus screenings of *The Hunting Ground* rolled out and there was increased student and stakeholder activism and media attention, there was a discernible shift in sentiment amongst university leaders towards the issue of sexual violence in Australian university environments.

The magnitude of this shift can be assessed by first considering the dismissive response to the ADFA review recommendation in 2011 that Group of Eight universities collect and share data about sexual assaults on their campuses.¹³ An article published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in November 2014 – ‘Survey on sex assaults on university campuses shelved’¹⁴ – clearly illustrated the position of the university’s peak bodies at that time:

A spokesperson for Universities Australia said universities were "aware of ongoing work" commissioned by the Broderick review.

"Universities Australia members have very comprehensive strategies in place covering issues such as travelling to and from campus, sexual ethics and assault, drug and alcohol abuse," the spokesperson said. "Our members are all very committed to student safety and ensuring a positive experience for all students."

A spokeswoman for the Group of Eight said they would not comment.

From early 2016, however, there were increasingly supportive and responsive comments made by senior leaders in the sector, as universities began to engage with the issue of sexual violence and acknowledge that a problem existed in Australia. The establishment of THGAP in 2015, initial discussions around a student survey in late 2015, and the release of *The Hunting Ground* in Australia in February 2016, were critical factors in leading this shift.

¹³ See Recommendation 25: Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), *Report on the Review into the Treatment of Women at the Australian Defence Force Academy: Phase 1 of the Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force* (Phase 1 Report), 3 November 2011, *ibid*, p. xxv, https://defencereview.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/ADFA_2011.pdf

¹⁴ Kate Stanton, ‘Survey of sex assaults on university campuses shelved’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 November 2014, <https://www.smh.com.au/national/survey-of-sex-assaults-on-university-campuses-shelved-20141115-11na07.html>

ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA'S *RESPECT.NOW.ALWAYS.* CAMPAIGN

On 12 February 2016, immediately preceding the launch of the THGAP campaign screening program, the peak body for 39 Australian universities, Universities Australia, announced its sector-wide *Respect.Now.Always* campaign to prevent sexual assault and harassment.¹⁵

Explicitly noting that screenings of the film would “encourage discussion in Australian university communities about the importance of respect and safety”, UA’s media release asserted “the determination of Australia’s universities to ensure that our students and staff are safe from sexual assault and sexual harassment.”

UA’s then lead Vice Chancellor on equity and diversity, Professor Ian Jacobs of UNSW Australia, stated in the release that “It is a shared effort – to raise awareness, to seek more comprehensive data to inform our responses, to exchange best practice, and to commit to keep improving.”

In March 2016, UA held a session at its *Higher Education Conference 2016* on the *Respect.Now.Always* campaign.¹⁶

In May 2016, in an opinion piece in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, ‘Australian universities have zero tolerance for sex assaults on campus’, UNSW Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Jacobs commented on the role of THGAP:

Universities Australia has worked with The Hunting Ground Australia Project team to facilitate campus screenings of the harrowing US film about sexual abuse on American campuses.

Coinciding with the screenings and campus-based forums, recent media reports have illuminated traumatic stories of our own. Our universities will not dismiss or deny this unpleasant truth and we

¹⁵ Universities Australia, *Respect. Now. Always. University sector launches new campaign*, Media Release, 12 February 2016, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/Media-and-Events/media-releases/Respect--Now--Always--University-sector-launches-new-campaign#.WxhFlmW2fEw>

¹⁶ Universities Australia, *Concurrent stream: Respect. Now. Always.*, Higher Education Conference 2016 Presentations, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/Media-and-Events/events/Higher-Education-Conference-2016/Higher-Education-Conference-2016-Presentations>

*are united in tackling and preventing sexual harassment and assault.*¹⁷

On 23 August 2016, UA announced that it had committed almost \$1 million to support Australia's first comprehensive national prevalence survey on university student experiences of sexual assault and sexual harassment.¹⁸ Noting that seed funding for the survey had been provided by THGAP, UA confirmed that the survey would be conducted by the Australian Human Rights Commission, with the support of the National Union of Students (NUS) and the National Tertiary and Education Union (NTEU).

Then-Chair of UA, Professor Barney Glover, Vice-Chancellor of Western Sydney University, was quoted in UA's media release, stating:

Our universities want to make it absolutely clear that we have a zero tolerance policy on sexual assault and sexual harassment... This survey will give us an even clearer picture of further work we need to do. University leaders are determined to use the survey results to keep improving our responses and the support we provide to students who have experienced sexual assault or harassment.

These initiatives represented a significant reorientation of UA's priorities, given that UA's 2014-2016 Strategic Plan contained no reference to addressing sexual violence.¹⁹

¹⁷ Professor Ian Jacobs, 'Australian universities have zero tolerance for sex assaults on campus', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 May 2016, <https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/australian-universities-have-zero-tolerance-for-sex-assaults-on-campus-20160513-goulv3.html>

¹⁸ Universities Australia, *Groundbreaking national university student survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment launched today*, Media release, 23 August 2016, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/Media-and-Events/media-releases/Groundbreaking-national-university-student-survey-on-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment-launched-today#.WxhITWW2fEw>

¹⁹ Notably, Universities Australia's 2017-2019 Strategic Plan does refer to *Respect. Now. Always.*, "A sector-wide campaign to prevent and address sexual assault and harassment in university communities", as part of its Function Area 3: Coordination of Collective Sector Effort.

RESPONSES TO THE AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S *CHANGE THE COURSE* REPORT

This shift in sentiment was further demonstrated in responses to the Australian Human Rights Commission's survey findings and *Change the Course* report in August 2017, when UA released a sector-wide *10 Point Plan* and university leaders made statements committing their institutions to implementing the *Change the Course* recommendations. These responses are discussed further below.



INCREASED MEDIA REPORTING

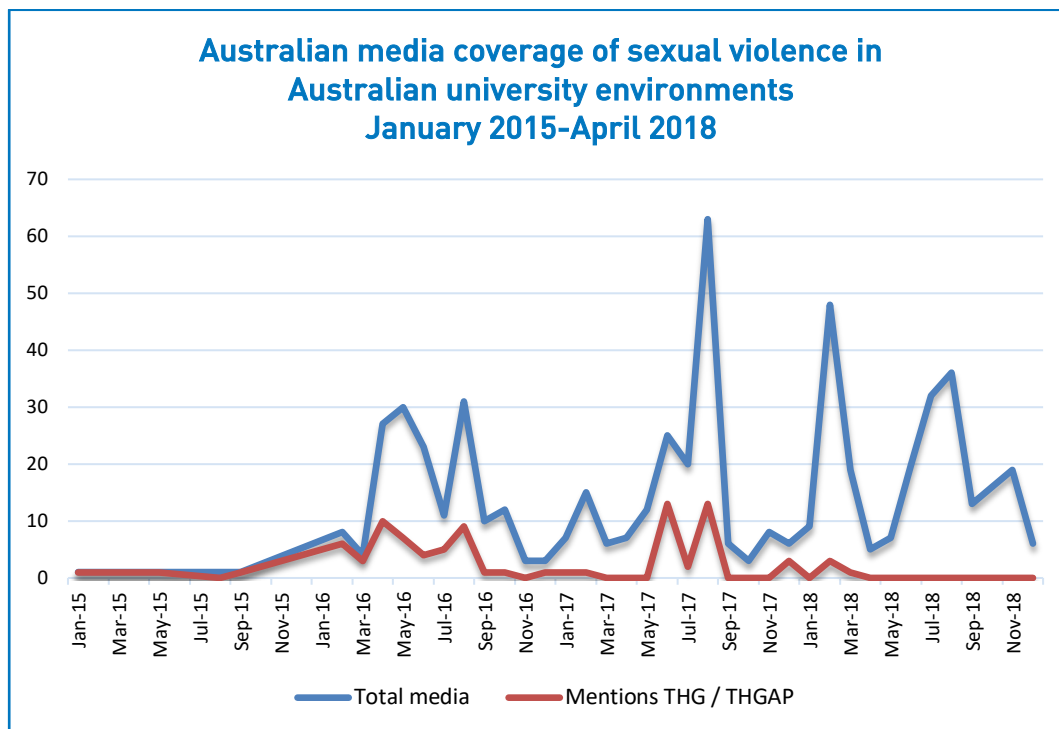
The substantial increase in media coverage around sexual violence in Australian university environments between 2015 and mid 2018 clearly indicated the success of THGAP, along with its partner organisations, in utilising the documentary and impact strategy to “start a conversation” around these issues.

From the commencement of THGAP, the team monitored Australian media reporting around the issue of sexual violence in university environments. As explored below, coverage began to increase in early 2016, coinciding with the commencement of the THGAP campus screening program and the announcement of Universities Australia’s *Respect.Now.Always* campaign in response, with several subsequent peaks in coverage around key campaign developments.

Between January 2015 and December 2018, the core period of THGAP’s campaign, almost 600 media reports were collated and analysed by THGAP team for trends. Articles available online were tracked via Google alerts using search terms including:

- sexual assault / sexual harassment / rape / universit*
- sexual assault / sexual harassment / rape / college
- Universities Australia / sexual assault / sexual harassment
- Australian Human Rights Commission / universit*/ sexual assault / sexual harassment
- Liz Broderick / universit*/ sexual assault / sexual harassment
- Nina Funnell
- Change the Course
- On Safe Ground

The graph below highlights the substantial increase in media coverage around these issues between January 2015 and December 2018.



Noted times of peak coverage included:

- April 2016 – focused on both the UNSW Baxter College rape chant video and the “Hotties of Melbourne Uni” Facebook page incidents – stories mostly centred on the incidents themselves, with a much smaller focus on involvement of involvement of college management and announcement of university investigations.
- May 2016 – focused on Wesley College (University of Sydney) journal and massage parlour incidents – initial stories focused on the incident itself, while later coverage commented on the failure of the college to co-operate with the university; other areas of the university’s response, including the announcement of a review of colleges by former Sex Discrimination Commissioner Liz Broderick; and responses from other students outraged at the events.
- 23 August 2016 – media focused on announcement of student survey on sexual assault to be undertaken by the Australian Human Rights Commission, and joint open letter by former University of Sydney Women’s Officers. Most stories primarily focused on the survey, with a couple acknowledging the role of THGAP in instigating the process. A number of articles highlighted the Women’s Officers’ joint open letter condemning the

University of Sydney's response to sexual assault and a subsequent campus protest.

- Late May/June 2017 – focused on St Pauls College (University of Sydney) Facebook scandals. Notably, articles at this time were more focused on overall college culture and history, college governance, college management's response, and the relationship between St Pauls and University of Sydney.
- June 2017 – coinciding with *The Hunting Ground* screening on ABC2 on 21 June 2017. Articles and reviews, both before and after the broadcast, primarily concentrated on the broad issue of sexual violence in Australian university environments and the impact that documentary was having. There were also a couple of negative articles around the film and THGAP at this time.
- Late July/early August 2017 – coinciding with the release of AHRC's *Change the Course* report. This period represented the most significant media coverage over the timeframe examined. Most reports initially focused on the data reported, with some coverage around individual university data. Subsequently there were also some reports detailing student and activists' criticism of Universities Australia's *10 Point Plan*, and university response in general. There were a number of opinion pieces, including criticism of the report – primarily across various News Limited publications, as well as at least one article in each of Crikey and the Spectator Australia and a couple of independent online outlets. Several articles and broadcasters clarified the leading role of THGAP and other student and advocacy organisations bringing about the national student survey.
- February-March 2018, following the release of EROC Australia's *The Red Zone Report* during Orientation Week 2018. Media reports focused on incidents of hazing, bullying, physical and sexual abuse at a number of residential colleges and universities and in many cases featured graphic images. There was a notable shift in coverage with political leaders including the Minister and Shadow Minister for Education and Training calling on college and university administrations to improve their efforts to curb these behaviours. Coverage during this period also focused on Universities Australia's annual conference having no sessions on

sexual violence and the call, by THGAP and its campaign partners, for the establishment of an independent expert-led Taskforce.

- July-August 2018, around the first anniversary of the release of AHRC's *Change the Course* report. Reports focused on university's progress since the landmark survey. Universities Australia released their *Guidelines for University Responses to Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment* in July 2018 and in collaboration with the National Tertiary Education Union, Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations Incorporated and Australian Council of Graduate Research released their *Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships* in August 2018, both garnering significant coverage.
- November 2018, when media initially reported that the Coalition government had deferred the establishment of an independent expert-led Taskforce, followed by the Labor opposition's announcement that it would establish such a Taskforce if elected in May 2019.

These patterns in media coverage reflected the national conversation that evolved over the course of THGAP's campaign: an initial focus on exposés of student misbehaviour and the emergence of strong student leadership with demands for improved institutional responses and better support for student survivors, followed by the establishment of baseline data, accompanied by commitments to institutional reform, the introduction of independent review mechanisms, following by regulatory and national political attention on the issue of campus sexual violence.

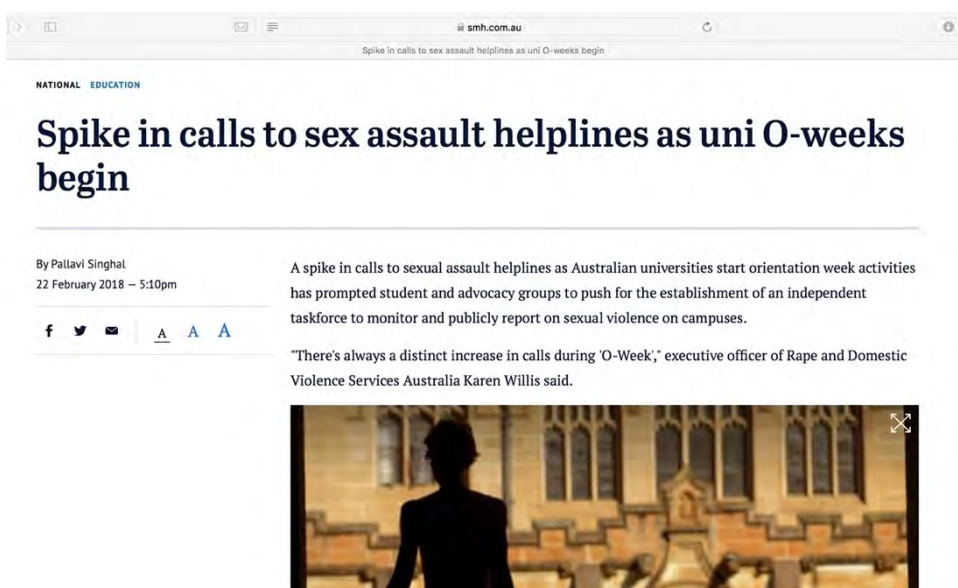
Journalist, survivor advocate and EROC Australia ambassador Nina Funnell featured strongly in print media coverage during this period, publishing several exposés around sexual violence and hazing in residential colleges.

In terms of broadcast media, among a general increase in media coverage compared to 2015, there were several significant programs to note:

- Triple J's *Hack* (ABC Radio) produced regular reports, focused on student's experiences and associated issues of slut shaming, consent and misogynistic culture in colleges throughout this period. These segments included:

- ‘The Hunting Ground: Is there a rape culture on our campuses?’ – 13 April 2016
 - ‘Teaching consent on campus’ – 27 February 2017
 - ‘Hazing, booze, bedrooms: Sexual assault, harassment rates much higher for college students’ – 1 August 2017
 - ‘Sexual assault complaints processes are a failure, Uni students warn’ – 21 February 2018
 - ‘What is your university doing in response to sexual assault and harassment?’ – 26 February 2018
- ABC’s 7.30 has also regularly reported on these issues. In May 2016 7.30 featured three female students from Wesley College at the University of Sydney, speaking out “about the culture of rampant sexism and excessive drinking at the college”, and subsequently in a second program interviewed University of Sydney’s Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence around heightened coverage of incidents at its affiliated colleges. In August 2016 the program reported on the AHRC investigation into the extent of sexual harassment and assault on Australian university campuses. In February 2018 7.30 broadcast a segment featuring college hazing rituals at prestigious Australian universities, as revealed in *The Red Zone Report*.
- *The Project* on Network Ten aired two segments on university sexual violence during this period. The first, in September 2016, featured two survivors and noted that the AHRC was undertaking a survey to establish rates of sexual assault and rape on Australian campuses. The second, in February 2018, highlighted the findings of EEROc Australia’s *The Red Zone Report*.
- The Seven Network’s *Sunday Night* program in October 2016 highlighted a ground-breaking Freedom of Information investigation targeting all 39 Australian universities. The program revealed that only six out of 575 reported sexual misconduct cases at Australian universities had led to student expulsions.
- The Nine Network’s *60 Minutes* in March and May 2018 ran two segments focused on student’s allegations concerning O-Week incidents at St Mark’s College at the University of Adelaide, *D for Disgrace* and *F for Fail*.

- In April 2018, Al Jazeera screened a documentary, *Australia: Rape on Campus*, highlighting international students' experiences of sexual violence at Australian universities.



SHIFT IN POLITICAL COMMENTARY

As with university leaders, there was a discernible shift in political commentary as THGAP and its associated activities progressed. As part of our efforts to start a conversation across the Australian community, THGAP corresponded with Federal and State and Territory Ministers in the Education and Women portfolios at the outset of the project, and when providing THGAP Progress Reports in July 2016 and July 2017. THGAP received increasingly encouraging responses to its correspondence over the course of the project, demonstrating a shift in sentiment as campus screenings continued and more information became available. Public media statements from political leaders also became more sympathetic to the issue of campus sexual violence as media discussion of the issue escalated, and particularly after the release of the AHRC's *Change the Course* report.

FEDERAL

In April 2016 the then Australian Minister for Education and Training Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham responded moderately to THGAP's initial correspondence:

I commend THGAP's work to promote campus safety, not just to stakeholders across the university sector, but also to the Australian community.

While Australia is a very safe place to live by international standards, it is vital that we continue to support universities to protect students and ensure that proper crisis and emergency services are available when needed.

The Minister's correspondence outlined the introduction of new Higher Education Standards, to take effect on 1 January 2017, and pointed to extra supports available to international students.

Coinciding with the August 2016 launch of the AHRC survey, Minister Birmingham provided a statement which outlined the "importance and value" of the initiative and asserted that "Sexual assault and abuse have no place in our society."²⁰

²⁰ Stephanie Anderson, 'Tanya Plibersek speaks out about university rape threat while launching sexual harassment project', *ABC News*, 23 August 2016,

On 1 August 2017, when the *On Safe Ground* report was released, Minister Birmingham issued a media release which noted that “Sexual assault and harassment have no place in Australian universities, just as they have no place anywhere in Australia” and “Australians rightly expect that universities provide a safe environment on their campuses.” While the Minister indicated that he had written to universities seeking their response to the survey’s findings and recommendations, and asking that they respond to TEQSA, the statement was otherwise restrained with respect to any role for government in driving accountability:

*Our government will work with universities to ensure they address the findings and recommendations of the Australian Human Rights Commission’s report and implement changes that will make them safer and more inclusive environments in the future.*²¹

The Minister’s commentary became more forceful in early 2018. In response to revelations in EROC Australia’s *The Red Zone Report* in February 2018, the Minister provided a statement castigating “some university leaders”:

This is exactly why there needs to be a zero tolerance approach to anyone being denigrated, abused or violated.

There’s no place for this sort of rubbish at our universities let alone in modern-day Australia.

*There’s no doubt these cases are the exception not the rule in Australia’s world-leading institutions and we expect all universities to take their responsibilities for student safety and wellbeing seriously and to act. Some university leaders clearly need to take a good hard look at the sort of environments that have been allowed to ferment on their campuses and at their colleges.*²²

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-08-23/deputy-leader-tanya-plibersek-on-rape-threats/7777700>

²¹ Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, ‘University Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment’, *Media release*, 1 August 2017, <https://www.senatorbirmingham.com.au/university-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment/>

²² Nina Funnell, ‘Penis drinking one of many degrading rituals at University of Newcastle’, *news.com.au*, 19 February 2018, <http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/penis-drinking-one-of-many-degrading-rituals-at-university-of-newcastle/news-story/d7cafa0beb4a26bed2dc7a8df1afbff0>

The then Shadow Minister for Education, Tanya Plibersek, was robust in her commentary on the issue of campus sexual violence. At the August 2016 launch of the AHRC survey, the Shadow Minister revealed her own experiences when a university women's officer;²³ in March 2018 she expanded on her views at Universities Australia's conference:

Put simply: if university residential colleges can't provide a safe environment, universities should make them.

If universities can't ensure colleges are safe, they should sever links with them. If some residential colleges and universities refuse to treat this seriously, governments must make them.

University residential colleges have a legal duty of care to their students and staff. If university residential colleges fail to fulfil that duty of care, in government Labor will compel them.

I want to be very clear, if we need to force colleges to do the right thing by their students and staff, we will. I'm not prepared to allow another 30 years of excuses.²⁴

As mentioned above, in November 2018 Plibersek announced that Labor, if elected in 2019, would dedicate \$1.8million over three years to establish an independent Taskforce to develop policy advice and track university responses to sexual violence. The Shadow Minister was quoted as explaining:

Thirty years ago we saw the same kind of complaints and heard the same kind of responses from residential colleges and universities.

While I acknowledge some residential colleges and universities have taken steps to address these issues, many have failed to take decisive action.

For too long, we have heard the same excuses. Not enough has been done to fix this. The time for excuses, the time for talk is over.²⁵

²³ Anderson, *op cit*

²⁴ The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, *Speech: Universities Australia Conference*, Canberra, 1 March 2018, http://www.tanyaplibersek.com/speech_universities_australia_conference

²⁵ Fergus Hunter, "'The time for talk is over': Labor announces taskforce on sexual assault at university campuses', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2018,

NEW SOUTH WALES

The NSW government initially displayed reluctance to engage with the issues. In February 2016, a Department of Education official responded on behalf of then Minister for Education, the Hon Adrian Piccoli MP, welcoming the campaign but emphasising:

Universities in NSW are essentially autonomous institutions under their enabling legislation, with full control over their administrative, academic and operational affairs. This includes policies and procedures that relate to the provision of safe environments, the protection of students and staff and the response and handling of incidents of violence or harassment.

In February 2017, in response to activist campaigns and media coverage, the NSW Labor Opposition launched a campaign, 'It's Time for Action', broadly focused on campus sexual assault but with a specific focus on colleges.²⁶

As the campaign around university sexual violence escalated, there was an apparent shift in the NSW Government's position. Following heightened concerns around behaviour at residential colleges it was reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in June 2017 that the new Minister for Education Rob Stokes had "requested advice on the options available to the NSW government in relation to potential changes or repeal of the various Acts which relate to university colleges."²⁷ Minister Stokes subsequently introduced legislation in November 2017 to repeal the *St John's College Act 1857* and create new legislation, reportedly stating: "It is to be hoped that these more contemporary governance arrangements and more diverse Council membership will help contribute to a positive and inclusive culture."²⁸

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/the-time-for-talk-is-over-labor-announces-taskforce-on-sexual-assault-at-university-campuses-20181129-p50i5b.html>

²⁶ See

https://www.johaylen.com/nsw_labor_commitment_to_it_s_time_for_action_campaign

²⁷ Pallavi Singhal, 'Rob Stokes considers overhaul of university college laws as St Paul's attempts to join review', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 June 2017,

<https://www.smh.com.au/education/rob-stokes-considers-overhaul-of-university-college-laws-as-st-pauls-attempts-to-join-review-20170601-gwibrd.html>

²⁸ Pallavi Singhal, 'Rob Stokes introduces changes to archaic Sydney University college laws', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 November 2017,

<https://www.smh.com.au/education/rob-stokes-introduces-changes-to-archaic-sydney-university-college-laws-20171122-gzql3d.html>. The *Saint Paul's College Act 1854* (NSW)

In July 2017 the NSW Minister for Women the Hon Tanya Davies MP wrote to THGAP:

I commend the THGAP on the work being undertaken and the much needed awareness it is bringing to issues concerning sexual assault, sexual harassment, consent, disclosure and reporting in Australian universities.

In August 2017 the Deputy Secretary of the NSW Department of Family and Community Services responded in almost identical terms to THGAP on behalf of the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Hon Pru Goward MP. The correspondence highlighted the development of the NSW Sexual Assault Strategy and noted that a consultative forum with university students and senior university staff had occurred in June 2017. The *NSW Sexual Assault Strategy 2018-2021* was subsequently released in July 2018, with a particular focus on working with NSW universities.²⁹

QUEENSLAND

The QLD government similarly displayed reluctance to engage with the issue of institutional accountability. In March 2016, a Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister for Education, the Hon Kate Jones MP, responded to THGAP:

While this is an important topic, Queensland universities are independent statutory bodies and operate autonomously. The Australian Government regulates universities, and all universities must have appropriate procedures in place for student welfare. Universities are responsible for the protocols and responses they provide for students who have experienced sexual violence.

and *Saint Paul's College Act 1857* (NSW) were subsequently repealed and replaced by the *Saint Paul's College Act 2018* (NSW).

²⁹ NSW Government, *NSW Sexual Assault Strategy 2018-2021*, July 2018, <https://www.victimsservices.justice.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/dcj/dcj-website/documents/children-and-families/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/sexual-violence/nsw-sexual-assault-strategy-2018-2021.pdf>

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The SA Minister for Higher Education and Skills the Hon Susan Close MP, responded more positively to THGAP, in March 2016 stating:

Your campaign is timely, particularly in light of recent increased media coverage given to the issue of violence against women in society... I hope your campaign garners widespread attention.

And again in August 2016:

I am pleased to note the encouraging response THGAP has received from Australian universities, and I note the significant progress THGAP has made in the development of an independent national survey and 'best practice' policies and protocols.

I offer my continued encouragement and support for THGAP in its campaign, and the significant positive social impact it seeks to achieve.

VICTORIA

The Chief of Staff to the Victorian Minister for Training and Skills, the Hon Gayle Tierney MP – who has responsibility for higher education – responded to THGAP in September 2017:

All sexual assaults occurring on a university campus or elsewhere are unacceptable and are to be strongly condemned. The release of the Australian Human Rights Commission's (AHRC) report on sexual assault and sexual harassment in Australia will aid universities to ensure campuses are safe for all students and staff.

I also commend you for the support you have provided to the AHRC for its report, and for the resources THGAP has developed to further support universities in responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The WA Minister for Education, the Hon Peter Collier MLC, was supportive of THGAP from the outset, stating in March 2016 correspondence:

I commend your organisation for the campaign to address sexual violence in Australian universities...

I have requested my Department of Education Services to forward your correspondence to the Vice Chancellors of Western Australia's universities expressing strong support for action to address the issue of sexual violence in Australian universities.

I take matters such as this very seriously and I will highlight this issue with the Vice Chancellors of the universities, at the next meeting of the Western Australian Higher Education Committee.

In August 2016 the Minister confirmed that the issue had been raised with Vice Chancellors of the universities at the June 2016 meeting of the Western Australian Higher Education Committee.

THGAP also received a positive response from the WA Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services, the Hon Simone McGurk MLA. In August 2017 the Minister wrote:

Based on the information in the enclosed progress Report – July 2017 and Action Toolkit – June 2017 it looks like you have been able to effect positive change in bringing to light issues associated with sexual harassment and sexual assault in Australian universities.

The release of both the Australian Human Rights Commission's report, Change the Course: National report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities, and the research report by the Australian Human Rights Centre, On Safe Ground: A Good Practice Guide for Australian Universities, are valuable contributions to being able to see the problem and identify solutions for bringing about effective change.

Thank you for taking the time to make me aware of your campaign and the work you are progressing with key partners to make

universities a safer and equitable place for learning and socialising, especially for young women in our communities.

Further, in October 2017 the Minister stated:

The documentary, and The Hunting Ground Australia project, have been highly effective in drawing attention to sexual assault on University campuses.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

In the Northern Territory, the Minister for Education Eva Lawler, responded favourably to THGAP in August 2017:

The Hunting Ground Australia Project and the report recently released by the Australian Human Rights Commission, Change the Course, clearly highlight the need for ongoing discussion and action to address sexual harassment and sexual assault in our universities.

I have forwarded the information you provided to Charles Darwin University for their consideration and hope that as a community we can all work together on reducing the incidents of sexual assault and harassment.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The ACT Chief Minister responded to the *Change the Course* report in August 2017, reportedly stating: "All Canberrans have the right to feel safe and one sexual assault at one of our universities is too many." The Chief Minister added student safety to the agenda for the next Vice-Chancellor's Forum.³⁰

³⁰ Emily Baker, 'ACT government to discuss university sexual assaults with ANU, UC heads', *Canberra Times*, first published August 2017, updated 24 April 2018, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/act-government-to-discuss-university-sexual-assaults-with-anu-uc-heads-20170803-gxokqx.html>

IMPACT: CHANGING MINDS

“Building on decades of advocacy on Australian university campuses, the release in Australia of the American film *The Hunting Ground* dramatically raised awareness in the university sector and Australian community of sexual violence at universities. It led to acknowledgment by the universities of their responsibility to better prevent and respond to all forms of sexual violence at universities.”³¹

Indira Rosenthal and Robin Banks

THGAP’s screening program and impact campaign led to changes in audience knowledge and attitudes and significantly increased media reporting around campus sexual violence, which combined to shift sentiment amongst university leaders and political leaders.

Greater awareness and understanding in the university sector and broader community resulted in more open discussions around the issue of sexual assault and harassment in Australian university environments and recognition of the need for institutional changes to better manage and prevent campus sexual violence.

³¹ Rosenthal, I. and Banks R., *An Initial Review of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response at the University of Tasmania*, March 2018, p.3, http://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1115982/SASH-Review-Report-Final-23-April-2018-002.pdf

THEORY OF CHANGE: IMPACT THEME 2

IMPACT THEME 2: BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

Increasing student and stakeholder activism around sexual violence in Australian university environments



INPUTS

- Documentary film
- Materials and resources to support screenings
- Philanthropic financial support for screening program
- Philanthropic financial support extended to student partner organisations
- Communication tools



ACTIVITIES

- Facilitate screenings followed by panel discussions featuring experts and key stakeholders – preview, campus, conference and community screenings supported by Screening Toolkit and Post-Screening Discussion Guide
- Develop Action Toolkit to mobilise audiences to take action
- Utilise communication tools to promote film and impact strategy
- Develop stakeholder partnerships and collaboration
- Provide seed funding for national student survey to collect independent baseline data
- Support student and survivor advocacy including mentoring EROC Australia



OUTPUTS

- Increasing student and stakeholder activism around the issue of sexual violence in Australian university environments



IMPACT

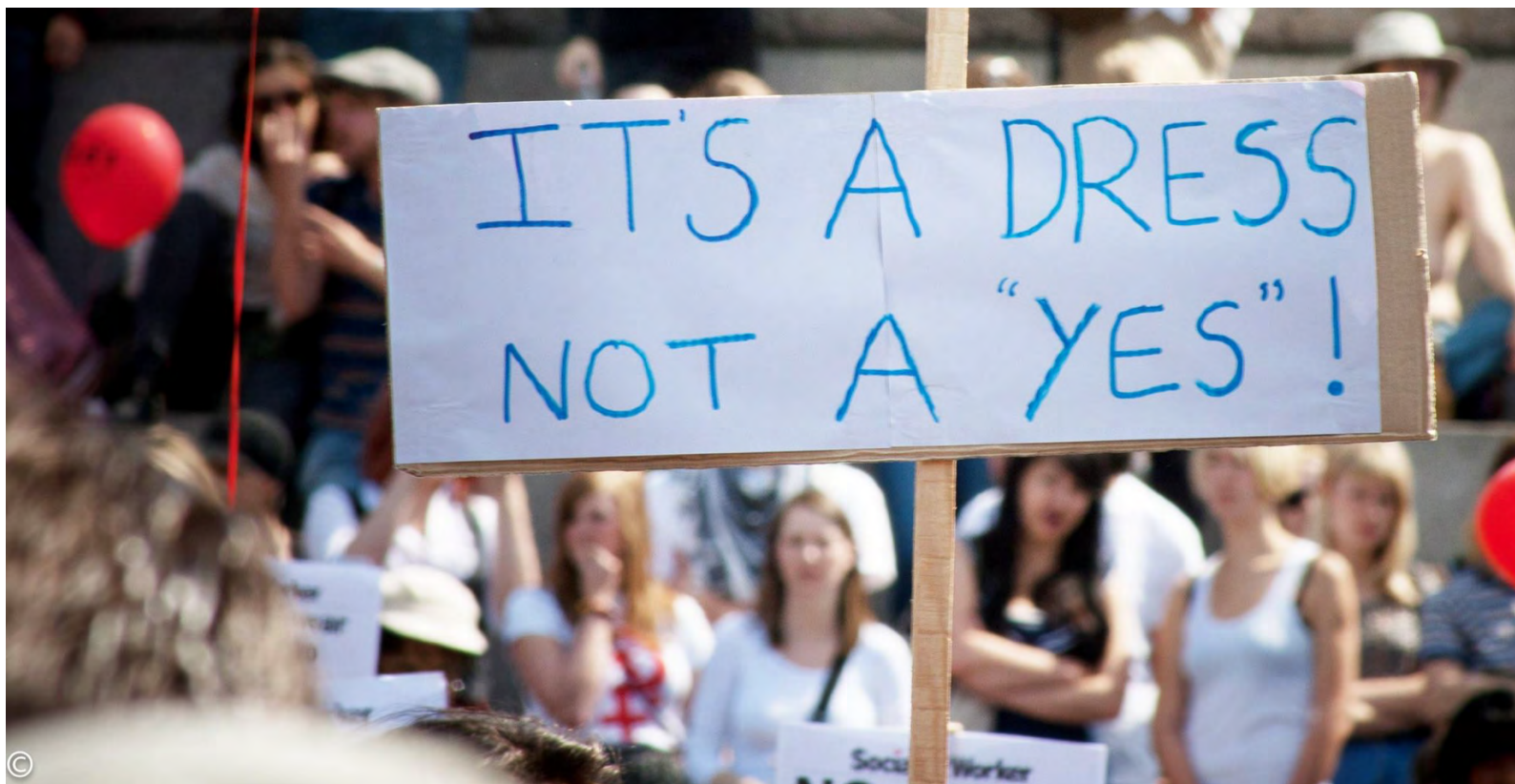
- Community of activism develops
- Universities and residential colleges engage with issue and acknowledge problem exists



OUTCOMES

INCREASED STUDENT AND STAKEHOLDER ACTIVISM AROUND THE ISSUE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENTS

Student leaders and representatives frequently participated in panel discussions following campus screenings of *The Hunting Ground*. Alongside the release of the documentary in Australia in early 2016, student and stakeholder activism around sexual violence in Australian university environments increased markedly, often in collaboration with THGAP. Some of these initiatives are considered below.



SYDNEY UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S OFFICERS

In August 2016, a group of 15 past and present Women's Officers at the University of Sydney issued a joint letter condemning the university administration for its mismanagement of sexual assault complaints and ongoing failures to address campus-based sexual harassment.³²

The joint letter stated in part:

For an entire decade we have been raising the issue of sexual assault and harassment on campus with the administration. For an entire decade we have been met with resistance to change.

It seems to us that the University has deliberately stalled action on sexual assault, assuming that once Women's Officers and other activists finish their term, or graduate from university, the institutional knowledge required for a sustained campaign on this issue is lost.

This assumption is unfounded.

We are writing as a united group to highlight that for well over a decade, the university has been aware of the issue of sexual assault on campus. For over a decade calls to change this culture have gone unanswered. The same stories of rape and harassment are repeated over and over. Periodically, a particularly high profile case may break into mainstream media, but as the media cycle moves on, and damage control measures are implemented, the issue is once again put to the bottom of the agenda.

This has gone on long enough.

The Women's Officers' joint letter included 12 demands, including research; education and training; and policy and procedures. The joint letter was reported in university and mainstream media.³³

³² Jane Gilmore, 'Women are taking a huge stand against Sydney Uni today and calling for action on sexual assault', *Junkee*, 23 August 2016, <http://junkee.com/women-taking-huge-stand-sydney-uni-today-calling-action-sexual-assault/83279#gZdIM44WHiXS7d04.01>

³³ Justine Landis-Hanley, 'First comprehensive national survey into campus sexual assault launches in Sydney', *Honi Soit*, 23 August 2016, <http://honisoit.com/2016/08/first-comprehensive-national-survey-into-campus-sexual-assault-launches-in-sydney/>; Nina Funnell, 'Women's Officers write scathing letter to the University of Sydney', *news.com.au*, 23 August 2016,

EROC AUSTRALIA'S COLLATION OF UNIVERSITY POLICIES

One of EROC Australia earliest projects was to launch the first national database of relevant policies, procedures and support mechanisms at each of Australia's 39 universities. By collating and publishing this information on EROC Australia's website, students and parents were able, for the first time, to compare key policies around sexual harassment and sexual assault, discrimination, staff codes of conduct and counselling services at Australia's universities. Student leaders also found the material extremely helpful, often being more accessible than what was available on university websites.

EROC AUSTRALIA'S *CONNECTING THE DOTS* REPORT

In January 2017, EROC Australia published *Connecting the dots: Understanding sexual assault within university communities*.³⁴ The 70 page report was prepared as a submission to the AHRC's process accompanying the 2016 student survey and provided an overview of the problem of sexual violence at tertiary educational institutions in Australia, highlighting universities' historical failure to adequately respond to the issue. *Connecting the dots* drew on EROC Australia's extensive experience working with, and advocating for, student survivors of sexual violence. It particularly detailed the obstacles many survivors experienced when reporting and seeking support from their institutions, and the often-devastating impacts in the aftermath of sexual violence.

This report details the disproportionate and devastating impact of assault on students, who are overwhelmingly female. It's an impact that can last a lifetime. Students underperform, drop out of their studies, struggle to trust others again and are at risk of developing mental illness. Alarming, many universities are

<http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/womens-officers-write-scathing-letter-to-the-university-of-sydney/news-story/c502f85b53e21d46c57d8a1040a2a294>;

Daisy Dumas, 'Women's officers say the University of Sydney is deliberately stalling action on sexual assault', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 August 2016,

<http://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/news-and-views/news-features/university-of-sydney-deliberately-stalls-action-on-sexual-assault-claim-councillors-20160822-gqyg2i.html>;

Anna Hush, 'Sexual assault on campus is systemic. But Sydney uni has failed to act for decades', *Guardian Australia*, 23 August 2016,

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/aug/23/sexual-assault-on-campus-is-systemic-but-sydney-uni-has-failed-to-act-for-decades>

³⁴ End Rape on Campus Australia, *Connecting the dots: Understanding sexual assault in university communities*, January 2017,

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5762fc04f5e231826f09afae/t/58b3d08ddb29d6e7a2b8271d/1488179368580/Connecting+the+dots.pdf>

*compounding this trauma by failing to support survivors and, in some cases, actively seeking to silence them.*³⁵

Connecting the dots included a wide-ranging set of recommendations for reform. It featured on the front page of the *Sydney Morning Herald* and was broadly covered in *The Guardian*, *The Canberra Times*, ABC news outlets, *Women's Agenda*, and *Buzzfeed*.³⁶

The *Connecting the dots* report and recommendations were also subsequently referred to in the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Change the Course* report, the Australian Human Rights Centre's *On Safe Ground: Strengthening Australian university responses to sexual assault and harassment* report, and in the *Cultural Renewal at the University of Sydney Residential Colleges* reports prepared by Elizabeth Broderick & Co.

FAIR AGENDA'S RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE SURVEYS

In 2016 THGAP partnered with community campaigning organisation Fair Agenda to support their campaign urging Australian university residences

³⁵ Professor Catharine Lumby (Macquarie University and Board Member, Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia) Foreword, *Connecting the dots* report, *ibid*.

³⁶ Eryk Bagshaw, "'Devastating' report shows universities are 'failing' students", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 February 2017, <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/devastating-report-shows-universities-are-failing-students-20170222-guj84k.html>; Helen Davidson, 'Universities 'actively covering up' sexual assault and harassment, report says', *The Guardian*, 27 February 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/feb/27/universities-actively-covering-up-sexual-assault-and-harassment-report-says>; Emily Baker, 'Canberra Rape Crisis Centre records "dramatic increase" in student contacts', *Canberra Times*, 28 February 2017, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/canberra-rape-crisis-centre-records-dramatic-increase-in-student-contacts-20170227-gum51q.html>; Danuta Kozaki, 'Rape claims at universities covered up, taken less seriously than plagiarism, advocacy group says', *ABC News*, 27 February 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-02-27/university-rapes-sex-assaults-rife-and-claims-covered-up-group/8306420>; Michael Edwards, 'Figures show most rapes on university campuses go unpunished', *The World Today: ABC news*, 27 February 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/worldtoday/figures-show-most-rapes-on-university-campuses-go/8307556>; 'How do universities deal with sexual assault?', *RN Drive: ABC*, 27 February 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/drive/how-do-universities-deal-with-sexual-assault/8308238>; 'Teaching consent on campus', *Triple J Hack: ABC*, 27 February 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/triplej/programs/hack/hack/8291472>; Georgina Dent, 'Sexual assault at universities is rife, covered up & rarely reported', *Women's Agenda*, 27 February 2017, <https://womensagenda.com.au/latest/eds-blog/sexual-assault-universities-rife-covered-rarely-reported/>; Gina Rushton, 'Australian Unis Have Been Accused of Covering up Sexual Assaults', *Buzzfeed*, 27 February 2017, https://www.buzzfeed.com/ginarushton/australian-unis-have-been-accused-of-covering-up-sexual-assa?utm_term=.dbk3PVPk#.ftYaPAPO

to promote the provision of best practice training in consent and prevention of sexual violence to all students and relevant staff.



New survey results: Which Uni residences are training to prevent sexual assault?

As discussed further below, Fair Agenda's campaign helped to drive significant improvements in the provision of expert led training in Australian university residences.

STUDENT CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Over the course of the THGAP campaign, representatives from THGAP, EROC Australia and Fair Agenda were regularly invited to participate in sessions with student leaders, discussing campus sexual violence and institutional responses. The THGAP team spoke at several NUS conferences at the beginning of each university year, the 2016 and 2017 NOWSA conferences and the 2017 National Association of Australian University Colleges annual conference at Mannix College at Monash University.

In response to *The Hunting Ground* screenings, NOWSA funded Sofie Karasek (who had featured in the documentary) to travel to Australia to participate in their annual conference in 2017. Sofie was the keynote speaker at the conference and participated in knowledge exchange activities with local student activists.³⁷

³⁷ See

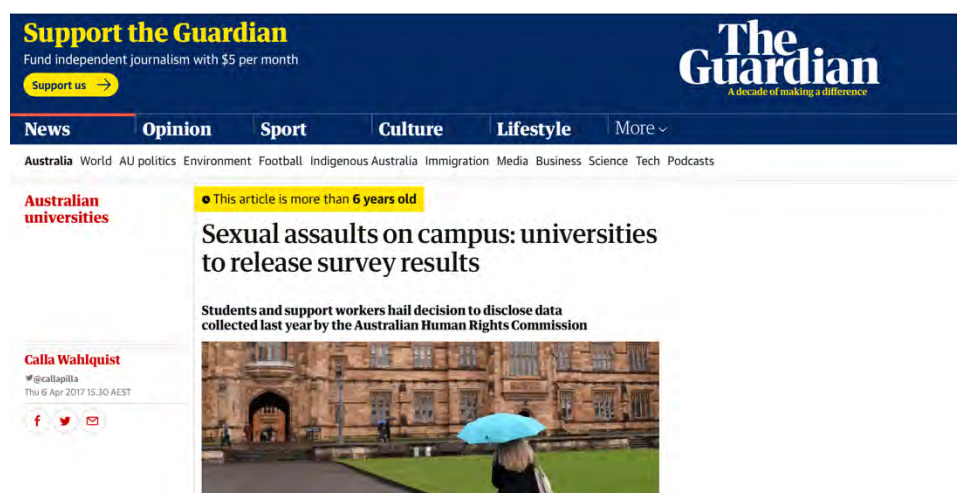
https://www.facebook.com/events/1475628169146863/?post_id=1496617963714550&view=permalink

EROC AUSTRALIA'S ADVOCACY AROUND DISCLOSURE TRAINING FOR WOMEN'S OFFICERS

In early 2017, EROC Australia successfully advocated for Women's Officers at universities to receive free training in both responding with compassion to disclosures of sexual assault and vicarious trauma. The campaign responded to concerns that Women's Officers were often the first person survivors turned to, and recognised that they needed extra support. Generously funded by the Australian Human Rights Commission, the training was provided by Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia in February 2017, to student leaders around Australia.

EROC AUSTRALIA'S ADVOCACY AROUND RELEASE OF INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS

In the lead up to the release of the AHRC report in August 2017, EROC Australia campaigned in the media for all universities to release their individual institutional data. While initially suggesting that the release of the institutional reports was "a matter for each university" Universities Australia subsequently released a statement confirming the commitment of all 39 Vice-Chancellors to publicly release the individual data they received as part of the AHRC's national student survey process.³⁸



³⁸ Universities Australia, 'Universities confirm release of sexual assault and harassment data', *Media Release*, 5 April 2017, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/universities-confirm-release-of-sexual-assault-and-harassment-data/>

THE GUARDIAN PODCAST AND VIDEO

To coincide with the ABC broadcast in June 2017, THGAP teamed up with *The Guardian* in the production of a podcast and video. Featuring *The Hunting Ground* Producer Amy Ziering; THGAP Campaign Director Allison Henry; Karen Willis OAM, then Executive Director of Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia; Anna Hush, then an Honours student and staff member at the University of Sydney and ambassador for End Rape on Campus Australia; Katie Thorburn, then co-Women's Officer at the University of Sydney Student Representative Council; and Mariam Mohammed, then Co-President of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) and founder of the Survivors Network.

Produced by Gabrielle Jackson, the podcast and video were prominently featured on *The Guardian's* website, serving to contextualise *The Hunting Ground* in Australia ahead of the imminent release of the AHRC and AHRCentre reports.³⁹



³⁹ 'What can The Hunting Ground teach Australia?' *The Guardian*, Video and podcast, 21 June 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/video/2017/jun/21/what-can-the-hunting-ground-teach-australia-video>

EROC AUSTRALIA AND FAIR AGENDA CAMPAIGN FOR UNIVERSITY COUNSELLING SERVICES

After conducting an audit of university counselling services, EROC Australia joined with Fair Agenda in July 2017 to campaign for funding of a dedicated specialist counselling hotline for students who had been subjected to sexual violence. While EROC Australia led on media coverage exposing deficiencies in the current system, an online petition run by Fair Agenda, urging Universities Australia and all Australian universities to “ensure that all students and former students affected by sexual violence at university have access to adequate, timely and trauma informed counselling services” garnered more than 2000 signatures and messages of support.⁴⁰ EROC Australia and Fair Agenda wrote to UA and all university Vice Chancellors, detailing some of these personal messages of support and calling for enhanced counselling services. UA subsequently announced that it would provide \$500,000 to Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia for the establishment of a hotline service to provide free, 24/7 trauma-informed support to sexual assault survivors within university communities.⁴¹

EROC AUSTRALIA'S #ENDRAPEONCAMPUS PHOTO CAMPAIGN

On the eve of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, EROC Australia asked their supporters, alumni, staff, members of the public and media to share their messages of support for survivors using the hashtag #EndRapeOnCampus. The campaign was designed to ensure that the voices of students and survivors were heard, while allowing them to retain control of how much information they disclosed.

⁴⁰ Fair Agenda, *Previous campaigns: Win! Hotline for student survivors of Uni sexual violence* https://www.fairagenda.org/uni_counselling

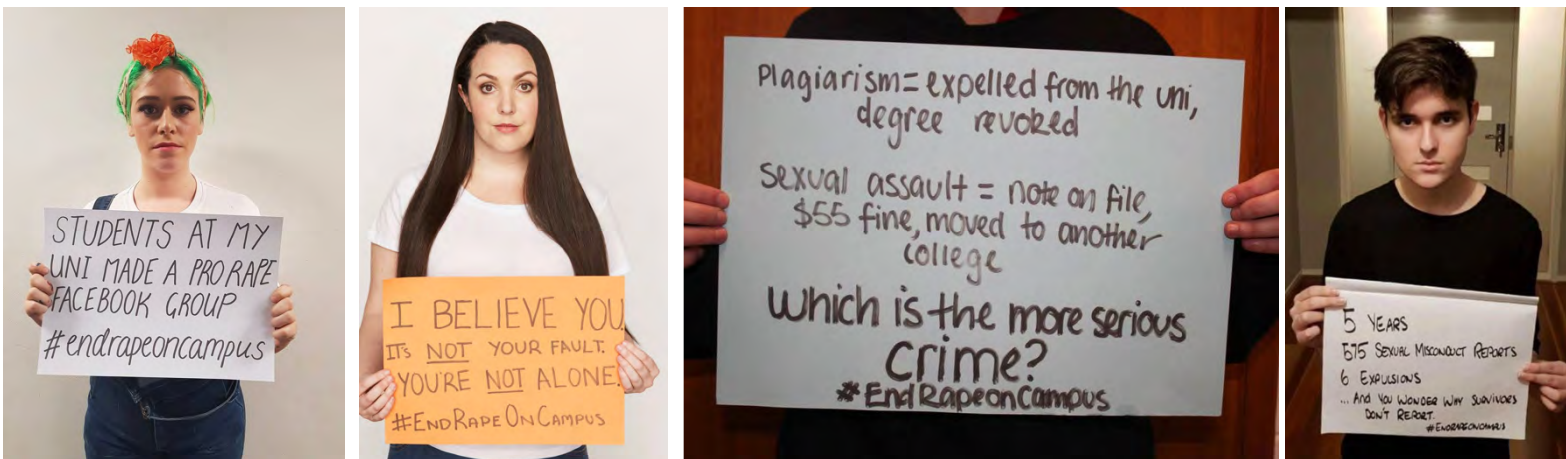
⁴¹ Universities Australia, ‘New 24/7 National University Support Line for Survivors of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment’, *Media Release*, 22 July 2017, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/new-24-7-national-university-support-line-for-survivors-of-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment/>; Nina Funnell, ‘Victory for students: Free hotline announced for victims of sexual assault’ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 July 2017, <http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/victory-for-students-free-hotline-announced-for-victims-of-sexual-assault/news-story/2d918c227be31858eef0ed25fd701274>

“As a community we must remember that behind every statistic there is a real person. We launched this campaign to put a human face on the issue and to remind the community that sexual assault survivors and other students are not merely numbers.”

Nina Funnell

End Rape on Campus Australia Ambassador

The campaign was hugely successful on social media and was covered by media including the ABC, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *news.com.au*.⁴²



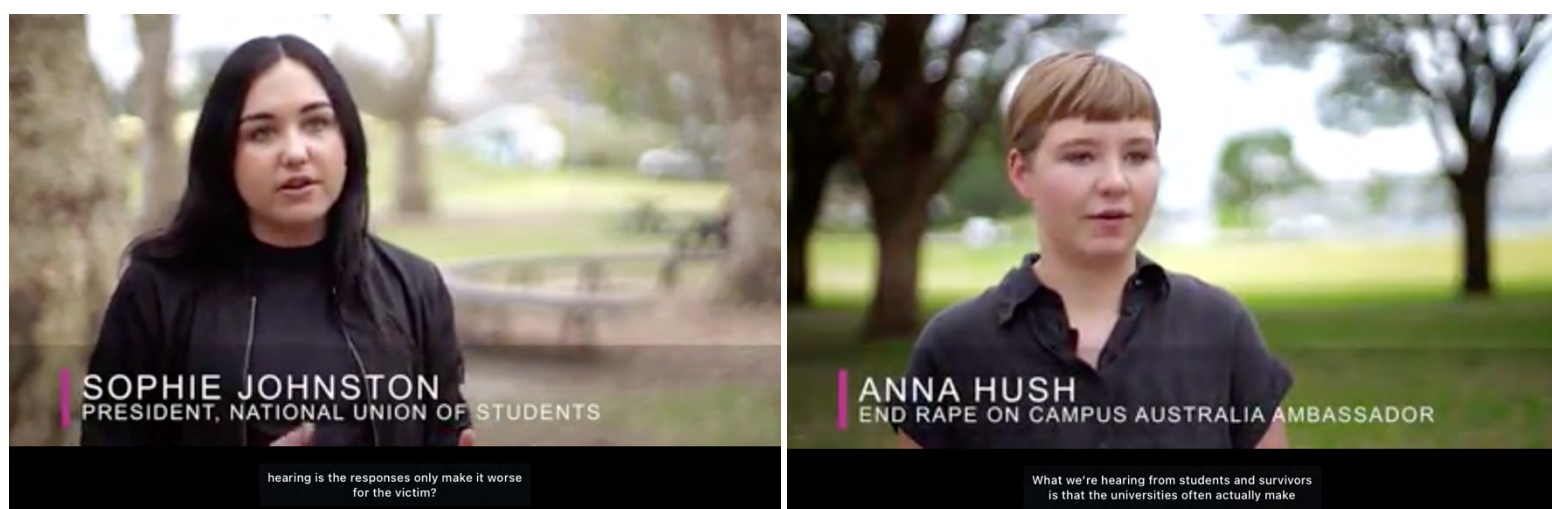
FAIR AGENDA'S VIDEO CONTENT

In August 2017, coinciding with the release of the two reports, Fair Agenda produced a 90 second video featuring students and activists – to contextualise the experiences of student survivors, and amplify their voices. This content was designed to ensure students voices and perspectives would be included in the initial media coverage of the

⁴² Sarah Whyte, “Don’t forget rape survivors” Photo campaign puts universities on notice’, *Triple J Hack: ABC*, 29 July 2017, <http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2017-07-29/rape-on-university-campaign-launched-by-eroc/8756446?pfmredir=sm>; Eryk Bagshaw, “My university failed me’: Survivors come forward with stories of sexual assault’ *Sydney Morning Herald*, July 30 2017, <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/my-university-failed-me-survivors-come-forward-with-stories-of-sexual-assault-20170724-gxhzkx.html>; Nina Funnell, ‘These pictures of rape survivors and students show what’s going wrong on campus’, *news.com.au*, 29 July 2017, <http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/these-pictures-of-rape-survivors-and-students-show-whats-going-wrong-on-campus/news-story/40e804b4b97ebbfdb3cb8e87474a153c>

report – coverage that was otherwise dominated by the voices of universities trying to defuse critiques of their approaches.

The video was released to mainstream media, and was subsequently embedded in numerous articles published by Fairfax publications and *The Guardian*, amongst others. The video was also posted on stakeholder Facebook pages and had more than 8000 views and 200 shares from Fair Agenda’s page.



EROC AUSTRALIA'S *THE RED ZONE REPORT*

EROC Australia released *The Red Zone Report*⁴³ in February 2018, coinciding with university's 2018 'Orientation Weeks', when first-year and newly arrived students are particularly vulnerable. The report outlined student experiences in residential colleges at 12 Australian universities, including hazing, bullying, excessive alcohol consumption, misogyny, ritualistic humiliation and physical and sexual abuse. The report produced a media storm, prompting responses from political leaders. The report and associated media articles also prompted the national higher education regulator, TEQSA, to contact the University of Newcastle, the University of Adelaide, the University of New South Wales and the University of Sydney requesting information regarding what actions the institutions were taking in response to the reports.⁴⁴

⁴³ End Rape on Campus Australia, *The Red Zone Report*, 28 February 2018, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5762fc04f5e231826f09afae/t/5a95cf99e4966ba2c2a64ca5/1519767581881/The+Red+Zone+Report+2018>

⁴⁴ Senate Standing Committees on Education and Employment, Parliament of Australia, *Additional Estimates 2017-18*, Question on Notice SQ18-000222.

NUS WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT *WE WILL NOT BE SILENT* CAMPAIGN

NUS Women's Department launched its *We Will Not Be Silent: It's Time to End Sexual Violence*⁴⁵ campaign early 2018, calling for universities to:

- Commit to the Australian Human Rights Centre's 18 Recommendations, set out in the *On Safe Ground* report
- Provide sexual ethics and managing vicarious trauma training for all university and college staff and students by experts in sexual violence
- Create and improve standalone policies and procedures so that they are survivor-centric with clear disciplinary consequences for offenders
- Provide trauma-informed support services for students, including an on-campus trauma-specialist counsellor with all materials and services available in all languages
- Maintain accurate and comprehensive records of reports

The campaign, run in conjunction with other unions and organisations, was accompanied by student protests at universities nationally.



⁴⁵ NUS Women's Department, *We Will Not Be Silent: It's Time to End Sexual Violence*, 2018, <https://www.megaphone.org.au/petitions/we-will-not-be-silent-end-sexual-violence>

NUS NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION

The NUS Women's Department called a National Day of Action for 1 August 2018, marking one year since the release of the *Change the Course* report, and again in August 2019.

News // National Day Of Action

National Day of Action sees students across universities unite against sexual violence

The protest has become the most important of the year among national Wom*n's Collectives since the AHRC report into campus sexual assault was released in 2017

by Vivienne Guo

August 20, 2019



JOINT CAMPAIGN FOR INDEPENDENT EXPERT-LED TASKFORCE

THGAP collaborated with campaign partners Fair Agenda, EROC Australia and the National Union of Students to develop common policy goals. In February 2018 the four groups launched a joint campaign calling for the Federal Government to establish an independent expert led Taskforce.⁴⁶ The campaign highlighted the absence of mechanisms to monitor whether universities and residential colleges were implementing the commitments made in response to the AHRC and AHRCentre reports, and called for an independent Taskforce to investigate and hold universities and residences to account on the systemic issue of sexual violence.

⁴⁶ Fair Agenda, End Rape on Campus Australia, National Union of Students and The Hunting Ground Australia Project, 'Joint statement calling for a taskforce to address university sexual violence', *Media Release*, 22 February 2018, https://www.fairagenda.org/taskforce_jointstatement

The four groups wrote to Minister Birmingham, asking that the Government urgently establish a Taskforce to track, assess and publicly report on university and residences' measures to prevent, and improve responses to sexual violence.

Taskforce campaign

A joint call for the Federal Government to establish an independent expert led Taskforce to investigate and hold universities and residences to account on the systemic issue of sexual violence

FAIR
AGENDA



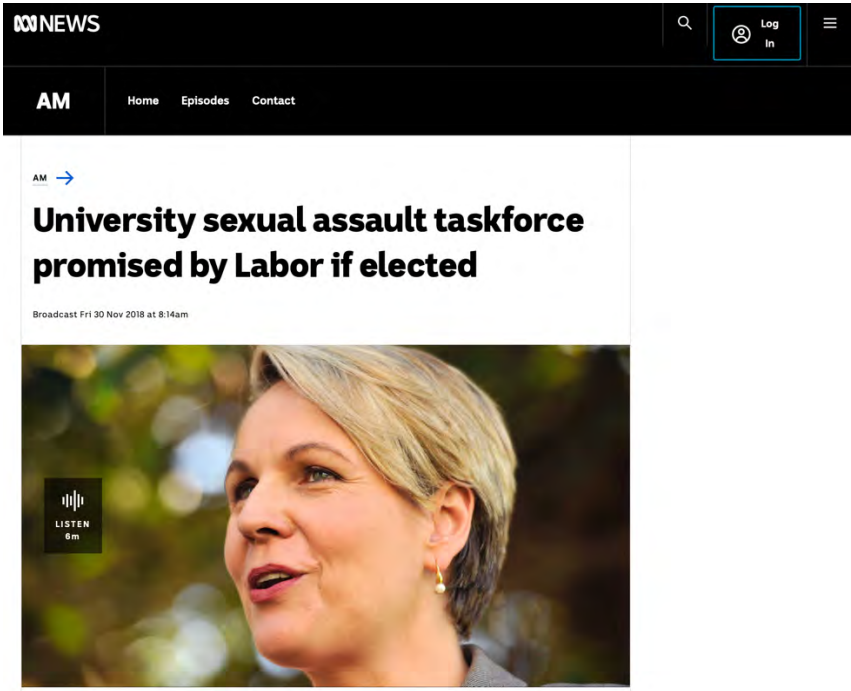
NATIONAL UNION OF
NUS STUDENTS
WOMEN'S
Department

THE
HUNTING GROUND
AUSTRALIA PROJECT



Representatives of the four groups met with both Minister Birmingham and Shadow Minister Plibersek in early April 2018 and received positive responses to the Taskforce proposal.

In November 2018 the Labor Opposition announced that it would establish a Taskforce if elected in 2019.



UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL'S *BREAK THE SILENCE: KEEP COLLEGE STUDENTS SAFE* CAMPAIGN

The University of Adelaide's Student Representative Council (SRC) were engaged in the campaign around campus sexual violence from early 2018, registering its concern in response to Al Jazeera's *Australia: Rape on Campus* documentary: "It is clear universities across Australia are not taking meaningful action to stamp out sexual assault on campus. Instead, they have allowed this culture to manifest through sheer negligence and a failure to act appropriately."⁴⁷

In June 2018, representatives of the SRC appeared in a 60 Minutes segment featuring allegations of hazing and sexual misconduct at St Mark's College, after former student Aria Kirwan was vilified and called a liar for revealing the initiation rituals in an earlier segment.⁴⁸



The college's initial response has angered the University of Adelaide's Student Representative Council (SRC) who told 60 Minutes "enough is enough".
Picture: 60 Minutes (9news)

The SRC subsequently launched a campaign and petition, *Break the Silence: Keep College Students Safe*, aimed at fostering a safer environment for students at South Australian Residential Colleges, and outlined a series of demands around improved, survivor-centric policies,

⁴⁷ Adelaide University Student Representative Council, Facebook, 27 April 2018.

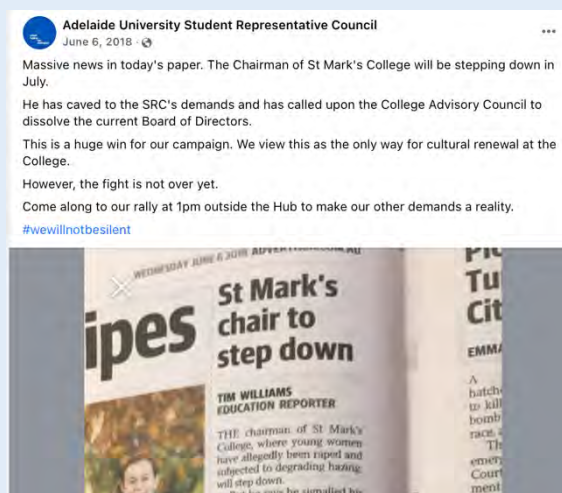
⁴⁸ Little, Liz, 'How degrading hazing rituals forced 18-year-old Aria Kirwan to quit uni', *60 Minutes: Nine Network*, 2 March 2018, <https://www.9news.com.au/national/2018/03/02/12/42/university-hazing-forcing-students-out-of-university>

procedures and training. The SRC also launched a blog to allow students to share their stories anonymously.⁴⁹



In support of the SRC's campaign a snap protest with the NUS Women's Department was held outside the University of Adelaide Hub on 6 June.

Within days, the SRC welcomed an announcement that the Chairman of St Mark's College would be stepping down in July, and had also called upon the College Advisory Council to dissolve the current Board of Directors. On 17 June 2018, the SRC strongly welcomed reports that TEQSA had issued a 'please explain' to the University of Adelaide following media attention on hazing rituals and sexual misconduct taking place at affiliated residential colleges. The SRC stated: "This is another huge win for our campaign to keep college students safe. Universities must be held to account if they have failed take adequate steps to ensure students' safety and wellbeing, whether they are on campus or at their College."⁵⁰



⁴⁹ https://metoostudentsadelaideuni.wordpress.com/?fbclid=IwAR2mv_Aki8AJyuFgRtq-0vU8iDQN5L5lp8EDNHpaOZxjil7nL4liPc6ry-A

⁵⁰ Adelaide University Student Representative Council, Facebook, 18 June 2018.

IMPACT: BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

“The biggest impact of [The Hunting Ground Australia Project] was bringing people together for the first time. We’d all been operating in silos, in isolation from one another. For the first time ever we had something concerted to rally around, and we had resources. We all of a sudden had the ability to meet, to come together around one particular issue, and actually work together as one functioning team instead of these disparate teams all over the country.”

Sharna Bremner, End Rape on Campus Australia

Student leaders, survivors, sexual violence advocates and feminist activists have campaigned for decades to raise awareness of sexual violence in Australian universities, agitating for improved institutional responses. Alongside THGAP’s impact campaign, with the resources available from THGAP, this activism increased exponentially. This heightened wave of student and stakeholder activism helped to make the case for universities and residential colleges to engage with the issue and acknowledge that the sexual violence is a significant issue in the Australian university sector.

IMPACT THEME 3: INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Encouraging reforms in how universities, residential colleges and governments manage and prevent sexual violence in Australian university environments



INPUTS

- Documentary film
- Materials and resources to support screenings
- Philanthropic financial support to support screenings and associated campaigns
- Communication tools



ACTIVITIES

- Facilitate screenings followed by panel discussions featuring experts and key stakeholders – preview, campus, conference and community screenings supported by Screening Toolkit and Post-Screening Discussion Guide
- Develop Action Toolkit to mobilise audiences to take action
- Utilise communication tools to promote film and impact strategy
- Develop stakeholder partnerships and collaboration
- Provide seed funding for national student survey to collect independent baseline data
- Commission Policies, Protocols and Procedures Project to develop good practice framework
- Commission the adaptation of existing sexual violence prevention programs to the Australian university context
- Support surveys of sexual violence prevention training provided by residential colleges
- Partner to support the development of three media factsheets
- Monitor university and residential college responses
- Lobby Commonwealth and State and Territory Ministers
- Engage in policy development activities
- Partner in collaborative campaigning



OUTPUTS

- Universities, residential colleges and their peak bodies engage with issue and acknowledge problem exists
- Universities (and UA) endorse, resource and implement policies and protocols to manage and prevent sexual violence
- Residential colleges (and UCA) endorse, resource and implement policies and protocols to manage and prevent sexual violence
- Increased uptake of qualified prevention, sexual ethics and consent training by universities and residential colleges
- Greater national regulatory attention to issue of sexual violence in Australian university environments



IMPACT

- Increased institutional awareness around what constitutes sexual violence in Australia university environments
- More visible university and residential college policies and procedures in management of sexual violence
- Enhanced support services for student survivors
- Improvements in student and staff training around sexual ethics, consent, bystander strategies, and how to respond to sexual violence
- Strengthened national regulatory mechanisms

OUTCOMES

UNIVERSITIES AND RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES ENGAGE WITH ISSUE AND ACKNOWLEDGE PROBLEM EXISTS

RESPONSES TO THE AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S *CHANGE THE COURSE* REPORT

University sector leaders increasingly engaged with the issue of campus sexual violence over the course of THGAP's campaign. The shift in sentiment was most clearly demonstrated by the proactive responses from peak bodies, Universities Australia and University Colleges Australia, and individual universities and residential colleges to the *Change the Course* report in August 2017.

Universities Australia

In her capacity as Chair of Universities Australia, Monash University Vice Chancellor Professor Margaret Gardner stated at the report launch:

*We are sorry that this happened to you. Sexual assault is a crime. The person who sexually assaulted you had no right to do what they did. It is not your fault.*⁵¹

To coincide with the launch of the *Change the Course* report, UA released its *10 Point Action Plan*, discussed further below.⁵²

Individual Universities

Many Vice Chancellors and senior staff made immediate statements in response to the *Change the Course* report, outlining their commitments to respond to the Commission's findings and recommendations. THGAP collated and analysed these statements to gauge the response.

⁵¹ Calla Wahlquist, 'Sexual assault survivors pushed for landmark survey of universities', *The Guardian*, 1 August 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/aug/01/sexual-assault-survivors-pushed-for-landmark-survey-of-universities>

⁵² Universities Australia (UA), 'Professor Margaret Gardner media conference - national survey on sexual assault and harassment', 1 August 2017, video accessed at: <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/uni-participation-quality/students/Student-safety/Respect--Now--Always-#.W1ANR2W2ePp>

Some university leaders expressed shock at the findings. Bond University Vice Chancellor and President, Professor Tim Brailsford, acknowledged that the survey results were confronting both locally and nationally saying, **“Today is a wake-up call...”**⁵³ while James Cook University Vice Chancellor Professor Sandra Harding said **“these results are confronting.”**⁵⁴ Murdoch University’s Vice Chancellor Professor Eeva Leinonen called it **“a watershed report”** and **“a catalyst for critical change.”**⁵⁵ (emphasis added)

Several Vice Chancellors commented on the significance of the survey and the importance of establishing baseline data.

*This report gives us, for the first time, a real understanding of how sexual harassment and sexual assault affect university students. It is difficult reading. The stories told by survivors are shocking. The results are shocking. We should all be shocked.*⁵⁶

Professor Brian Schmidt AC, Vice Chancellor
Australian National University (ANU)

*So we knew that there was a problem at universities, we knew there was a problem in society generally but these statistics have got to shock anybody.*⁵⁷

Michael Spencer, Vice Chancellor
University of Sydney

Others university representatives noted that the prevalence of sexual violence in their institutions, as revealed by the Commission’s survey, was unexpected. The Director of Student Services and Administration at La Trobe University, Professor Richard Frampton, commented that “I think we are now seeing it is much more prevalent than we might have

⁵³ Bond University, *AHRC National Report*, Media Release, 1 August 2017, <https://bond.edu.au/news/49417/ahrc-national-report>

⁵⁴ James Cook University, *JCU response to AHRC national student survey*, Media Release, 1 August 2017, <https://www.jcu.edu.au/news/releases/2017/august/jcu-response-to-ahrc-national-student-survey>

⁵⁵ Murdoch University, *Respect. Now. Always.*, Media Release, 1 August 2017, <http://media.murdoch.edu.au/respect-now-always>

⁵⁶ Message from ANU Vice-Chancellor Professor Brian Schmidt AC, *ANU response to the UA-HRC report on sexual assault and harassment at universities*, 1 August 2017, <http://www.anu.edu.au/news/all-news/anu-response-to-the-ua-hrc-report-on-sexual-assault-and-harassment-at-universities>

⁵⁷ ‘Michael Spence discusses the report into sexual assault at university’, *7.30 Report*, ABC TV, 1 August 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/michael-spence-discusses-the-report-into-sexual/8765016>

thought”⁵⁸ while the provost of Western Sydney University’s Bankstown campus, Professor Peter Hutchings, similarly stated “The issue was already on WSU’s radar, but the scale of the problem was very disappointing.”⁵⁹

Three Vice Chancellors offered apologies:

*On behalf of Southern Cross University, I want to apologise without reservation to all of those persons under our care who have experienced sexual assault or harassment. Every case of sexual assault or harassment is one too many. We have the potential to shape change, both in our own university communities and across society, and we will do so...*⁶⁰

Professor Adam Shoemaker, Vice Chancellor,
Southern Cross University

On behalf of the University I want to start by saying sorry. Sorry to any student, to any staff member, to any member of our alumni community who has experienced sexual harassment or sexual assault on our campus. One incident is more than we should accept.

*I also want to say sorry to any student, to any staff member, to any member of our alumni community who has not received what they needed from the university in dealing with sexual harassment or sexual assault. We must – and we will – do better.*⁶¹

Professor Brian Schmidt AC, Vice Chancellor,
Australian National University

⁵⁸ Aseel Sammak, ‘La Trobe responds to sexual harassment’, *Upstart*, 23 August 2017, <http://www.upstart.net.au/la-trobe-responds-to-sexual-harassment/>

⁵⁹ Danielle Buckley, ‘Data shows sexual harassment is rife in Australian universities, and crimes are going unreported’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 7 August 2017, <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/the-express/data-shows-sexual-harassment-is-rife-in-australian-universities-and-crimes-are-going-unreported/news-story/742da638c558cbf0180a312998cf0238>

⁶⁰ Southern Cross University (SCU), ‘Southern Cross responds to National Report on Sexual Assault and Harassment’, *Media Release*, 1 August 2017, <https://www.scu.edu.au/engage/news/latest-news/2017/southern-cross-responds-to-national-report-on-sexual-assault-and-harassment.php>

⁶¹ ANU, *ANU response to the UA-HRC report on sexual assault and harassment at universities*, *op cit*.

*To survivors, we are sorry that you've encountered this trauma at our university.*⁶²

Professor Peter Hoj, Vice Chancellor,
University of Queensland

Statements issued by Charles Sturt University,⁶³ Deakin University,⁶⁴ ANU,⁶⁵ the University of Melbourne⁶⁶ and the University of Queensland⁶⁷ explicitly acknowledged survivors, with several Vice Chancellors affirming that sexual violence was not the fault of victim / survivors.

*Sexual harassment and sexual assault are unacceptable. Every time. Such harassment and assault are never the fault – or the responsibility – of the victim. As a community we are committed to learning from these results and making this a safer place for students.*⁶⁸

Professor Glyn Davis, Vice Chancellor
University of Melbourne

*Sexual harassment and assault is never the survivor's fault, and will not be tolerated at UQ.*⁶⁹

Professor Peter Hoj, Vice Chancellor
University of Queensland

Statements issued by Charles Sturt University⁷⁰ and the University of Adelaide⁷¹ also acknowledged the high level of unreported incidents.

⁶² University of Queensland (UQ), 'Respect. Now. Always.', *Media release*, 1 August 2017, <https://www.uq.edu.au/news/article/2017/08/respect-now-always>

⁶³ Charles Sturt University (CSU), 'CSU acts to keep students safe', *Media Release*, 1 August 2017, <http://news.csu.edu.au/latest-news/charles-sturt-university/csu-acts-to-keep-students-safe>

⁶⁴ Deakin University, 'Deakin VC: AHRC Report a line in the sand for nation', *Media Release*, 1 August 2017, <http://www.deakin.edu.au/about-deakin/media-releases/articles/deakin-vc-ahrc-report-a-line-in-the-sand-for-nation>

⁶⁵ ANU, *ANU response to the UA-HRC report on sexual assault and harassment at universities*, *op cit*.

⁶⁶ University of Melbourne, 'Respect. Now. Always. University of Melbourne data', *Media Release*, 1 August 2017, <http://newsroom.melbourne.edu/news/respect-now-always-university-melbourne-data>

⁶⁷ UQ, *op cit*.

⁶⁸ University of Melbourne, *op cit*.

⁶⁹ UQ, *op cit*.

⁷⁰ CSU, *op cit*.

⁷¹ University of Adelaide, 'Uni of Adelaide Adopts All Respect. Now. Always.', *Recommendations, Media Release*, 1 August 2017, <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/news/news93882.html>

Individual universities subsequently implemented a range of measures to address sexual assault and sexual harassment, and many took steps to review and address the factors contributing to sexual violence in their residential colleges and university residences.

University Colleges Australia

University Colleges Australia (UCA) is the representative professional body for Heads and Deputies of residential colleges and halls throughout Australia. In response to the Commission's *Change the Course* UCA immediately issued a statement proclaiming its "a zero-tolerance approach on these types of matters."⁷² UCA subsequently later established an internal Respectful Relations, Response and Resources Advisory Group to lead its response to sexual assault and sexual harassment, discussed further below.

Individual Residential Colleges

Few individual residential colleges or colleges leaders responded to the release of the *Change the Course* report. One exception was Damien Powell – the Principal at Janet Clarke Hall at The University of Melbourne, who had been an advisor to THGAP – and who stated in part:

*The College wishes to offer a deep and unreserved apology to anyone who has suffered through our failings, at an institutional level, and at any time throughout our history, in addressing the issues of sexual harassment and sexual assault.*⁷³

Dr Damien Powell, Principal
Janet Clarke Hall at The University of Melbourne

Several residential colleges subsequently commissioned reviews into the factors contributing to sexual violence in their facilities, and implemented changes to their policies, practices and training.

⁷² University Colleges Australia (UCA), 'Change the Course: National report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian Universities', *UCA Statement*, 1 August 2017, <https://universitycollegesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/UCA-Statement-on-AHRC-Report-Changing-the-Course.pdf>

⁷³ Janet Clarke Hall (The University of Melbourne), *College Response to University Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment*, undated, <https://jch.unimelb.edu.au/Response-to-Sexual-Assault-and-Harassment-on-Campus~77>

UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA AND INDIVIDUAL UNIVERSITIES ENDORSE, RESOURCE AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS TO MANAGE AND PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Universities Australia (UA), as the peak industry body for Australia's 39 universities, had participated in the Good Pitch event which launched THGAP in September 2015 and assisted the THGAP team to schedule campus screenings at universities across the country.

In 2016 UA launched their *Respect. Now. Always.* campaign and then contributed additional funding to the Australian Human Rights Commission for the national student survey, enabling the extension of the survey to all of Australia's 39 universities.

Following the release of the *Change the Course* report in August 2017, Australia's university sector committed to a broad range of activities to respond to the report's findings and recommendations.

UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA'S 10 POINT ACTION PLAN

In August 2017, in immediate response to the release of the Commission's *Change the Course* report, UA launched its *10 Point Action Plan: An initial response from Australia's universities to the national student survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment*.⁷⁴

The *10 Point Action Plan* grouped the university sector's "next steps" around four themes:

- awareness and prevention
- improving support
- reviewing progress
- colleges and residential halls

Initiatives outlined included the previously-announced 24/7 national interim counselling support line and a commitment to continue the *Respect. Now. Always.* awareness campaign, together with the development of new guidance materials; enhanced training for university

⁷⁴ Universities Australia, *10 Point Action Plan: An initial response from Australia's universities to the national student survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment*, August 2017, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Companion-Report-Web-version.pdf>

staff, counsellors and university leaders; an undertaking to work with Universities Colleges Australia to provide access to first responder training for residential colleges and halls of residence; and a commitment to undertake a second national student survey.

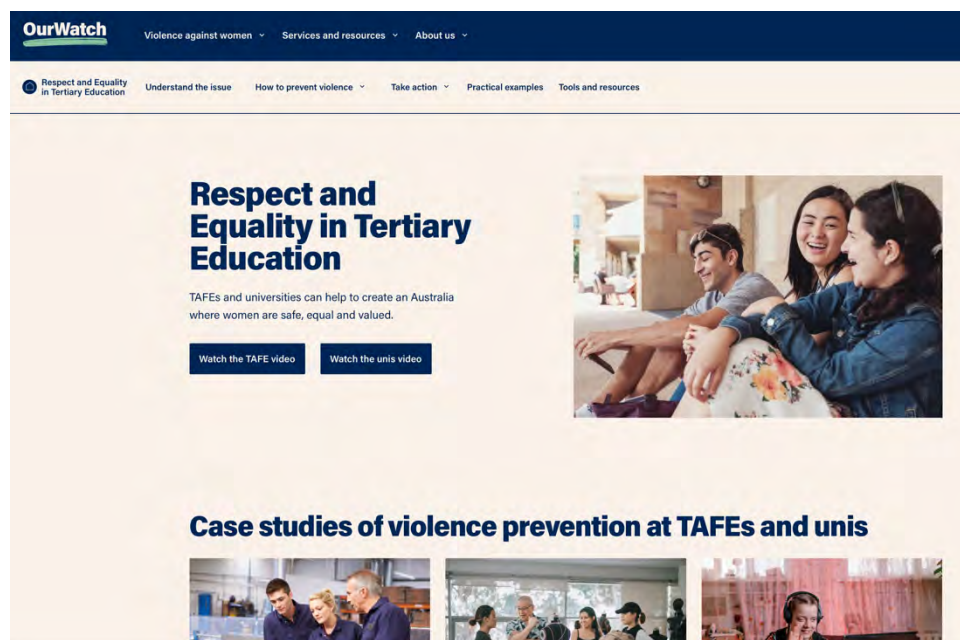


⁷⁵ Universities Australia, 'Students at the Centre: New Guidelines for University Responses to Sexual Harassment And Sexual Assault', *Media release*, 20 July 2018, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/students-at-the-centre-new-guidelines-for-university-responses-to-sexual-harassment-and-sexual-assault/#.XPMUjy2B1p9>

⁷⁶ Universities Australia, National Tertiary Education Union, Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations Incorporated and Australian Council of Graduate Research, *Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships*, 1 August 2018, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/Media-and-Events/media-releases/Relationships-between-academic-supervisors-and-their-students-are-never-okay#.XPMwFC2B1p8>

EDUCATING FOR EQUALITY

In February 2019 UA announced a partnership with Our Watch and the Victorian Government's Office for Women, together with four universities,⁷⁷ to develop the Respect and Equality Program, "a whole-of-institution approach to prevent gendered violence", including a "next-generation respectful relationships education program."⁷⁸ *Educating for Equality* was released by UA, Our Watch and the Victorian Government in March 2021 with UA promoting it to "a world-leading holistic model to help universities prevent gendered violence." (emphasis added)⁷⁹ A separate website based with Our Watch⁸⁰ has been established to source the *Educating for Equality* frameworks.



⁷⁷ Universities Australia, 'Universities partner with Our Watch and the Victorian Government to deliver Respect and Equality Program', *Media release*, 6 February 2019, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/universities-partner-with-our-watch-and-the-victorian-government-to-deliver-respect-and-equality-program/>

⁷⁸ Jackson, C. (CEO, Universities Australia), 'RESPECT. PREVENT. RESPOND.', Keynote speech to the Respect. Prevent. Respond. Conference at Deakin University on 6 February 2019, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/respect-prevent-respond/>

⁷⁹ Universities Australia, 'Our Watch and Universities Australia Launch New Resources to Stop Gendered Violence', *Media release*, 10 March 2021, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/our-watch-and-universities-australia-launch-new-resources-to-stop-gendered-violence/>

⁸⁰ educatingforequality.org.au

‘RESPECT. NOW. ALWAYS. – 800 MAJOR STRIDES FORWARD AND MORE TO COME’

On the first anniversary of the Commission’s *Change the Course* report, UA released a media statement that “800 major actions and initiatives have been instigated by Australian universities over the past year to contribute to a society-wide push against sexual violence. A year on from a national university-funded student survey, all 39 universities have continued to enhance student support services, university policies and prevention programs.”⁸¹

Amongst these initiatives UA highlighted:

- respectful relationships and consent education programs;
- greater access to specialist counselling for students and staff;
- increased visibility and access to support and emergency lines through websites, social media, and student guides;
- improved orientation and pre-arrival information for international and residential students;
- upskilling counsellors and support staff;
- first responders and bystanders training for students and staff;
- new streamlined online reporting tools and de-identified, confidential data collection;
- enhanced engagement with sexual violence services, police and transport authorities;
- major reviews of policies and procedures, including creating standalone policies on sexual assault and sexual harassment;
- awareness campaigns and student-led initiatives;
- campus-specific safety and emergency apps; and
- new initiatives and partnerships with residential colleges and accommodation providers.

⁸¹ Universities Australia, ‘Respect. Now. Always. – 800 Major Strides Forward and More to Come’, *Media release*, 1 August 2018, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/respect-now-always-800-major-strides-forward-and-more-to-come/>

INDIVIDUAL UNIVERSITY RESPONSES

Statements by university leaders in response to the Commission's *Change the Course* report, as outlined above, were matched with institutional action as individual universities introduced new policies, procedures and training to manage and prevent sexual violence in their institutions.

In the three years following the *Change the Course* report, individual universities regularly self-reported on their responses to the report's recommendations to the Commission and TEQSA.⁸² Universities reported the implementation of a range of initiatives including:

- establishing internal advisory bodies or working groups to lead their response to the Commission's recommendations;
- undertaking reviews of existing university policies and response pathways;
- increasing the availability and visibility of support services;
- providing training and education to students around sexual assault, sexual harassment and respectful relationships;
- conducting audits of university counselling services;
- providing first response training to staff members and student representatives most likely to receive disclosures; and
- initiating reviews of residential college responses to sexual violence.

⁸² See Australian Human Rights Commission, *Audit of university responses to Change the course report – Audit 2017*, December 2017, <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/audit-2017>; Australian Human Rights Commission, *Audit of university responses to the Change the course report Snapshot of progress: August 2018*, 1 August 2018, <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/audit-2018>; Australian Human Rights Commission, *Change the course - 18 month milestone*, 14 May 2019, <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/change-course-18-month-milestone>; Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), *Change the course – 3 year milestone*, 27 October 2020, <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/change-course-3-year-milestone-2020>; Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), *Report to the Minister for Education: Higher education sector response to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment: An overview of Australian higher education provider responses to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment*, 25 January 2019, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/report-minister-education-higher-education-sector-response-issue-sexual>

EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL UNIVERSITY RESPONSES

ANU

In response to the *Change the Course* report, ANU established a Respectful Relationships Unit and developed the ANU Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy 2019-2026⁸³ that is being implemented in three phases, each supported by a Rolling Action Plan.

ANU identified regular public reporting of de-identified outcomes of reported incidents of sexual violence as a key accountability measure, and in March 2022 published *Sexual Misconduct Reports & Disclosures*.⁸⁴ The report was limited to data about disclosures rather than information about institutional responses and/or disciplinary measures.

It included:

1. data on the number of disclosures;
2. information about the person reporting; the relation of the person impacted to ANU and their age, gender and residence;
3. disclosed behaviour (sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic and family violence, bullying and harassment); time and location of incident; and
4. the alleged perpetrator's relationship to ANU and gender.

It was hoped that the data provided in the report would allow ANU "to better identify barriers to students reporting and disclosing incidents of sexual misconduct and areas where we can improve our prevention work through the Respectful Relationships Unit."⁸⁵

⁸³ ANU Respectful Relationships Unit, ANU Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy 2019-2026,

https://www.anu.edu.au/files/corporate_message/sexualviolenceprevention_0.pdf

⁸⁴ ANU, Sexual Misconduct Reports & Disclosures, March 2022,

https://www.anu.edu.au/files/corporate_message/Sexual%20Misconduct%20Reports%20and%20Disclosures%20-%20Report_0.pdf

⁸⁵ *ibid*, p.11.

UNSW

In 2021 UNSW published its second *Annual Report on Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Response*.⁸⁶ The report detailed UNSW's efforts to prevent and respond to gendered violence, including through the university's *Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Strategy 2019-2021* and *Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy*. Among the key institutional actions identified were awareness raising; staff training, induction and evaluation; student training and induction; first responder training and training for colleges and student clubs and societies.

Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Response noted that UNSW has a dedicated website for information on sexual misconduct, including resources on making a report through the Sexual Misconduct Reporting Portal, obtaining support and training. The report included a table detailing data relating to reporting numbers, including:

1. Number of reports and Who the reporter was
2. Type of report (including sexual assault, sexual harassment, indecent assault, online behaviours)
3. When the incident occurred
4. Where the incident occurred
5. Person affected and their relationship to the alleged person responsible
6. Services accessed
7. Support & action requested
8. Investigations and disciplinary actions

The report also collated UNSW and external support services and contact details, and identified UNSW's priorities for future improvements.

⁸⁶ UNSW, *2021 Annual Report: Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Response*, 1 January – 31 December 2021, <https://www.edi.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/Final%202021%20Annual%20Report%20230622.pdf>

SECOND NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

Universities Australia in August 2019 announced that it would be supporting a second student survey in 2020.⁸⁷ However the impact of COVID-19 meant that the survey was postponed and implemented in September-October 2021.⁸⁸

NATIONAL STUDENT SAFETY SURVEY

Home Results About

About the NSSS

The National Student Safety Survey (NSSS) ran across the Australian university sector in late 2021.

The survey collected data on the scale and nature of university student experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault. It was conducted by the Social Research Centre (SRC) in partnership with leading violence prevention expert Associate Professor Anastasia Powell of RMIT University.

Results and analysis is being conducted and compiled by the SRC into a quantitative and qualitative national report, as well as individual quantitative reports for each university. These reports were released on Wednesday 23 March 2022.

The university sector's response was [released by Universities Australia](#).

⁸⁷ Universities Australia, 'Next Student Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment to run in 2020', *Media release*, 16 August 2019, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/next-student-survey-on-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment-to-run-in-2020/>

⁸⁸ Universities Australia, *Frequently Asked Questions: 2021 Student Survey of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment*, <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/policy-submissions/safety-wellbeing/frequently-asked-questions/>

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES AUSTRALIA AND INDIVIDUAL RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES ENDORSE, RESOURCE AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS TO MANAGE AND PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES AUSTRALIA'S *CULTURAL RENEWAL FRAMEWORK*

Following the release of the *Change the Course* reports in August 2017, UCA released a statement affirming their commitment and support of Universities Australia *Respect. Now. Always.* campaign and *On Safe Ground*. The release stated that UCA was:

... undertaking a review of the report and its recommendations and believe that this provides an opportunity for university residential colleges and halls to better respond to the risk of sexual violence and sexual harassment and further develop appropriate prevention strategies.

Further,

The report will present us with an opportunity for cultural focus and, where required, reform; working together for stronger and better collegiate communities.

In September 2017, UCA hosted *Leaders and Partners in Changing the Course*, which considered the formulation, framework and Terms of Reference for a UCA working party on contributing factors, response best practice, and resources in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment in university student residential settings.

In May 2018, UCA wrote to THGAP advising of the establishment of the *UCA Respectful Relations – Response and Resources Advisory Group*. Explicitly acknowledging the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, the stated aim of the Advisory Group was to “support its members to better respond to the risk of sexual harassment and sexual assault and achieve stronger collegiate communities, characterized by respectful relationships.” Through the Advisory Group, UCA “intends to identify and develop a comprehensive resource base aimed at eliminating and preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment within the sector and stimulate important cultural renewal.”

The Advisory Group subsequently developed UCA's *Cultural Renewal* framework with seven key components:

- primary prevention and education
- early intervention
- incident/emergency response
- counselling and support
- investigation/disciplinary processes
- recording and reporting and
- continuous improvement.⁸⁹

“UCA acknowledges that over the histories of residential colleges and halls, students have been let down at times when they have most felt the need for help and, as members, we apologise for any suffering to those survivors of sexual assault and sexual harassment. We are all dedicated to promoting the wellbeing of students. As an organisation, UCA seeks to assist members in achieving the highest quality outcomes for students.”

Rose Alwyn

University Colleges Australia President

⁸⁹ University Colleges Australia, 'Respectful Relations – Response and Resources Advisory Group', *E-news*, June 2018, <https://universitycollegesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/UCA-Communique-21-June-2018-copy-01.html>

INDIVIDUAL RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE RESPONSES TO THE *CHANGE THE COURSE* REPORT

Recommendation 9 of the *Change the Course* report was directed at residential colleges and suggested that “residential colleges and university residences should commission an independent, expert-led review of the factors which contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings.”

A number of colleges implemented this recommendation and several of these reviews have been made public:

- *Cultural Renewal at the University of Sydney Residential Colleges*⁹⁰
- *Review of ANU residences’ response to sexual assault and sexual harassment: Australian National University*⁹¹
- *University of New England College Review*⁹²
- *A Report on the College Row Cultural Review 2018 in The University of Western Australia’s Residential College Setting*⁹³



⁹⁰ Elizabeth Broderick & Co, *Cultural Renewal at the University of Sydney Residential Colleges*, November 2017, <https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2017/11/29/broderick-report-on-cultural-renewal-at-colleges-received.html>

⁹¹ NOUS Group, *Review of ANU residences’ response to sexual assault and sexual harassment: Australian National University*, 4 December 2018, <https://imagedepot.anu.edu.au/scapa/Website/ResidentialReviewReport.pdf>

⁹² Australian Human Rights Commission, *University of New England College Review*, 27 May 2019, <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/independent-review-residential-colleges-university-new>

⁹³ Jahn Health Consultancy, *A Report on the College Row Cultural Review 2018 in The University of Western Australia’s Residential College Setting*, 2019, <https://www.uwa.edu.au/students/-/media/Project/UWA/UWA/Students/Docs/A-Report-On-The-College-Row-Cultural-Review-20181.pdf>

CULTURAL RENEWAL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

Following sustained negative media coverage concerning alarming hazing rituals and college traditions at their colleges, the University of Sydney's Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor in May 2016 announced that independent colleges affiliated with the University had been invited to work with former Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick AO to address concerns about their culture.⁹⁴ Five of the colleges joined the process immediately, with St Paul's College initially refusing to co-operate but later joining the review following media reports around institutionalised sexism.⁹⁵

After discussion groups and interviews with 632 students and alumni during late 2016 and 2017, and an online survey with 1001 participating students, Elizabeth Broderick & Co provided an overarching thematic report to the University and individual reports to each participating college. The consolidated report detailed college students' experiences with sexual misconduct, hazing rituals and alcohol consumption, finding that 25% of women and 6% of men reported experiencing sexual harassment and 6% of women and 1% of men reported that they had experienced actual or attempted sexual assault since commencing at college.

The report made 23 recommendations, including that each College and the University of Sydney develop with an expert, a stand-alone policy that articulates a zero tolerance approach to sexual misconduct, a commitment to trauma informed victim/survivor support and strong action against those who breach the policy.

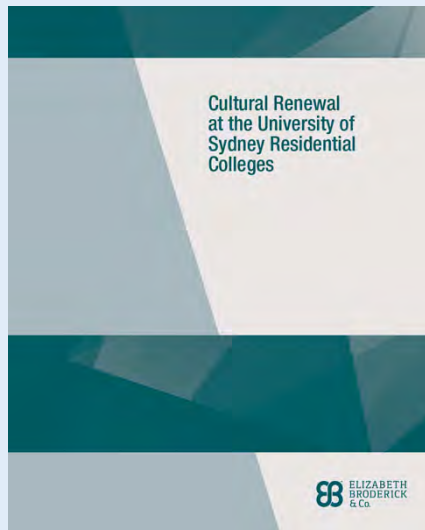
*A stand-alone policy sends a clear message to all students of the College's position on sexual misconduct. It also signals to survivors that all incidents and reports are taken seriously and in so doing, contributes to the creation of a safer reporting environment.*⁹⁶

Elizabeth Broderick AO

⁹⁴ The University of Sydney, 'University asks residential colleges to improve culture', 20 May 2016, <https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2016/05/20/university-asks-residential-colleges-to-improve-culture-.html>

⁹⁵ Naaman Zhou, 'St Paul's college joins University of Sydney's review of "culture of sexism"', *The Guardian*, 2 June 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/jun/02/st-pauls-college-joins-university-of-sydneys-review-of-culture-of-sexism>

⁹⁶ Elizabeth Broderick & Co, 'Release of the Cultural Renewal at the University of Sydney Residential Colleges', *Media Statement*, 29 November 2017, accessed at <https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2017/11/29/broderick-report-on-cultural-renewal-at-colleges-received.html>



Sydney University colleges welcomed the report and accepted the recommendations.

The College is committed to ensuring that the recommendations on sexual misconduct are carried out and it has already taken steps to address this issue.⁹⁷

Master Lisa Sutherland, Wesley College

We stand united and accept all the findings of the Cultural Review without reservation. We appreciate that there needs to be a shift in the way we do some things at College and we will work with determination to develop our responses to the recommendations to ensure a safer community for all our students and for all students at other residential Colleges at the University of Sydney. We will work with the University and other Colleges to develop and implement all the recommendations.⁹⁸

Sancta Sophia College

The St Pauls' College report was released in September 2018, accompanied by an Action Plan and a strong statement of commitment from the College leadership:

⁹⁷ Wesley College, 'Wesley College Endorses Review Findings', *Media Statement*, 29 November 2017, <http://www.wesleycollege-usyd.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Wesley-College-Media-Statement-29-11-17.pdf>

⁹⁸ Sancta Sophia Colleges, *Broderick Review into College Culture*, undated, <https://www.santasophiacollege.edu.au/about-sancta/broderick-review-into-college-culture/>

The Broderick Report shows that, while there is much for the College to be very proud of, including considerable progress in many areas, there are also aspects to be ashamed of. For these matters, we are deeply sorry.

We apologise unreservedly for any harm done to anyone by unacceptable behaviour by any members of the College, past or present, and where we have failed to take the strongest stance we could against such behaviour.

We are utterly determined to be leaders in preventing and responding strongly to sexism, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. We are equally determined to uphold the values of respect and dignity for all, regardless of gender.⁹⁹

Don Markwell, Head of St Paul's College

Several of the individual residential colleges subsequently provided progress reports against the Broderick review recommendations, detailing new policies around sexual misconduct, alcohol consumption and student leadership; reviews of Codes of Conduct; and sexual misconduct, first-responder and bystander training.¹⁰⁰ Representing a key improvement in university and college governance, Heads of Colleges now present annually to the University of Sydney's Senate.

As detailed below, many residential colleges positively responded to Fair Agenda's campaign around the provision of sexual violence prevention training to college staff and students.

⁹⁹ "'Ashamed": Culture of troubled St Paul's college revealed in Broderick review', *Triple J Hack*, 14 September 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/triplej/programs/hack/st-pauls-review/10247704>

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, St Paul's College: *Progress Report on implementation of Action Plan for Cultural Renewal*, 25 June 2019, <https://www.stpauls.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Progress-report-on-implementation-of-the-Action-Plan-for-Cultural-Renewal-June-2019.pdf> and *Progress Report on implementation of Action Plan for Cultural Renewal*, 29 May 2020, <https://www.stpauls.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Broderick-Review-Action-Plan-2020-Update.pdf>; St Andrew's College, *Progress report on implementation of recommendations – end of year one*, 30 November 2018, <https://www.standrewscollege.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/Broderick-End-of-Year-One.pdf> and *Report on implementation of recommendations – end of year two*, 30 November 2019, <https://www.standrewscollege.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/Broderick-End-of-Year-two-1.pdf>

INCREASED UPTAKE OF QUALIFIED PREVENTION, SEXUAL ETHICS AND CONSENT TRAINING BY UNIVERSITIES AND RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

From the outset of the campaign, one of the key impact objectives of THGAP was to increase sexual violence prevention training in Australian university contexts. To this end, THGAP worked with key partners at the Full Stop Foundation and Fair Agenda to develop and promote expert-led training. These efforts, together with the sector's implementation of recommendations in the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, have seen a significant increase in the uptake of qualified prevention, sexual ethics, consent and response training by universities and residential colleges since THGAP commenced in 2015.

FULL STOP FOUNDATION'S *SEX, SAFETY & RESPECT* PROGRAMS

In early 2016 THGAP engaged the Full Stop Foundation – led by Professor Moira Carmody, a recognised international expert on sexual assault prevention education, Karen Willis OAM, then the Executive Officer of Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia (RDVSA) and Associate Professor Kath Albury from UNSW – to adapt existing ethics and consent training programs to the Australian university context.



Training: Sex, Safety & Respect: understanding consent

This workshop introduces university students to the Sex & Ethics framework for decision making in intimate relationships.

> [Learn more](#)



Training: Sex, Safety & Respect: educators train the trainer

Licensing and training to deliver elements of the Sex & Ethics program to university students.

> [Learn more](#)

The *Sex, Safety & Respect* program and training materials¹⁰¹ that were developed comprised three programs:

1. *Sex, Safety and Respect: Educators Sex & Ethics Training Program* – a four day training program for staff in universities and residential colleges, designed to build the capacity of staff to themselves deliver a 6-session program, or shorter workshops, for students.
2. Ethical leadership to prevent gender-based violence in universities – a four hour workshop for staff in universities and residential colleges, incorporating the three hour student program with extended time spent on developing their skills in leadership through bystander skills to intervene in risky situations and to set a positive and respectful culture within the colleges.
3. Understanding sexual consent & preventing sexual violence in universities – a three hour workshop for university students, which introduces participants to key concepts concerning sexual violence in the Australian context; legal responsibilities including ethical use of digital media; and skills in being an ethical bystander, managing sexual assault disclosures; and helping their friends and other students and how to access confidential internal and external support services.

Based on international best practice research on sexual assault prevention, the workshops include a variety of delivery models, including interactive sessions, role plays, videos triggers for discussion of case studies, direct input on legal issues and responding with compassion to survivors of sexual assault, and detailed group discussion.

Experienced trainers and educators from RDVSA and the Full Stop Foundation, who are provided with specific training and assessed for their suitability for delivery in university settings, facilitate the workshops. Crucially, all facilitators are trained counsellors with specific expertise and daily experience in providing crisis and ongoing trauma counselling to survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.

¹⁰¹ See <http://www.thehuntinggroundaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/THGAP-Sex-Safety-and-Respect-Training-Resources-FINAL.pdf>

Between June 2016 and June 2018 the Full Stop Foundation delivered two 4-day staff training programs for educators, covering three universities (Macquarie University and Western Sydney University in June 2016, and the University of Queensland in November 2017), and four 4-hour *Ethical Leadership* workshops for staff (Colombo House at UNSW, University of Wollongong and Bond University). Some 121 staff – drawn from varied roles in the university including student leader or mentor roles in a college, university housing, counsellors, equity and diversity officers and a range of roles in student services – have undertaken these programs. Staff feedback included:

The whole training was very confronting but also informative - I am leaving feeling more empowered.

Work with colleagues in faculty to improve our culture; as leader how careful, thoughtful and active I need to be (constantly!)

Most requests to the Full Stop Foundation, however, were for the 3-hour *Sexual Consent* workshop for students. Some 766 students from five universities (including 13 residential colleges) have participated in this workshop, which have usually involved more female students than male. These students were enrolled in a diversity of courses and at varying levels of study, drawn from residential colleges on campus or student housing, and were usually fulfilling a leadership role within the residence for which they received a variety of training.

Feedback forms were distributed at the end of each workshop to inform written evaluations. Staff responses indicated that staff knowledge levels were high at the end of the workshop, with over 80% indicating an increased understanding of how a victim may feel and over 90% indicating they felt more confident to help a victim if they came to them for help.

Student knowledge levels following the workshop were extremely high around sexual consent with almost 100% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the legal term of 'free agreement' is a key aspect of consent law. They also showed strong agreement that the use of digital media for sending sexually explicit material was criminal. Between 85-95% of students reported knowing of skills in relation to bystander intervention strategies, feeling more confident to understand how a survivor may feel and how to help a survivor of sexual assault if they came to them for assistance. Student feedback included:

... very helpful and well presented, and I feel more prepared to deal with these situations...

I appreciated how the speaker emphasised how it wasn't all about saying 'no' if you wanted to say 'yes'.

I enjoyed the training and think the use of audience involvement and openness to answer questions was great.

Staff at the national higher education regulator, TEQSA, have undertaken the Full Stop Foundation's *Sex, Safety & Respect* program, "to increase their knowledge and understanding of the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment."¹⁰²

FAIR AGENDA'S RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE CAMPAIGN

THGAP partnered with community campaigning organisation Fair Agenda to urge Australian university residences to ensure that their students and relevant staff were provided with best practice training in consent and prevention of sexual violence.



New survey results: Which Uni residences are training to prevent sexual assault?

Working with experts in the prevention of sexual violence to determine the most important questions to ask about the quality and quantity of training provided, Fair Agenda developed a survey to collect the first ever public record of the consent and sexual violence training provided by residences, including indicators to track the inclusion (or lack thereof) of best practice training in this area.

¹⁰² TEQSA, *Report to the Minister, op cit*, p.12.

Between September 2016 and early 2020 Fair Agenda approached Australia's university residences on seven occasions with the questionnaire regarding what, if any, training they provided staff and students and then collated and displayed responses from residences in a publicly searchable format on its website.¹⁰³ The website documented responses provided, or not provided, by each residence – allowing parents and students to compare the core components of the training programs of different colleges across universities and states.

Use this screen to scroll left and right

RESIDENCE	NORMANBY HOUSE	RICHARDSON HALL	ROBERTS HALL	SOUTH EAST FLATS	RMIT VILLAGE
UNIVERSITY	MONASH	MONASH	MONASH	MONASH	RMIT
STATE	VIC	VIC	VIC	VIC	VIC
WILL ALL STUDENTS RECEIVE RELEVANT TRAINING?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
WILL A SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICE BE INVOLVED IN STUDENT TRAINING?	YES	YES	YES	YES	UNKNOWN
DOES THE TRAINING INCLUDE SEXUAL CONSENT TRAINING?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
IS THE TRAINING PER STUDENT AT LEAST 2 HOURS?	PARTIAL YES	PARTIAL YES	PARTIAL YES	PARTIAL YES	PARTIAL YES
WILL STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR RESIDENT WELFARE BE PROVIDED WITH RELEVANT TRAINING?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
WILL A SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICE BE INVOLVED IN STAFF TRAINING?	YES	YES	YES	YES	UNKNOWN
DOES THAT TRAINING INCLUDE HOW TO RESPOND TO DISCLOSURES?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
DOES THAT TRAINING INCLUDE HOW TO CREATE A ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE?	YES	YES	YES	YES	UNKNOWN

YES PARTIAL YES NO UNKNOWN DID NOT RESPOND

* The information above represents survey responses provided by the residences themselves. Fair Agenda does not take responsibility for the accuracy of the information provided by residences.
 Please note: If you represent a university residence and would like to update or provide a survey response, please contact Fair Agenda via info@fairagenda.org.

DETAILED RESULTS

Fair Agenda then secured strategic media coverage to build student and parent awareness about the issue of campus based sexual violence, and around the importance of residences providing training to prevent sexual violence. The media coverage helped to build pressure on residence decision-makers to improve their training.

Rape and sexual assault

Calla Wahlquist
 @callapilla
 Mon 19 Feb 2018 06:00 AEDT

Campus sexual assault prevention 'inadequate at Australian universities'

Survey finds majority of colleges run online training but only a third have involved a sexual assault support service in setting it up



¹⁰³ Fair Agenda, *New survey results: Which Uni residences are training to prevent sexual assault?* 18 February 2020, https://www.fairagenda.org/residences_survey

By undertaking regular surveys Fair Agenda was able to gather baseline data about the training being provided by residences and to track the impact of their campaign for improvements in training over time.

	Sept 16	Feb 17	Jul 17	Mar 18	Nov 18	Jan 19	Dec 19	Feb 20
Residences surveyed	218	214	218	225	233	233	235	234
Residences responded	94	102	129	148	133	146	114	118
STUDENT TRAINING								
Residences that indicated they would train any students	88	96	119	147	133	146	114	118
Sexual assault service involved in training any students	30	38	54	93	124	117	68	71
Training includes content around ethical bystander training	56	66	89	125	130	143	89	92
STAFF TRAINING								
Any staff trained	86	94	122	146	133	146	111	117
Sexual assault service involved in training any staff	37	43	58	109	129	120	75	77
Staff training includes content on how to create a zero-tolerance environment for sexual violence	81	87	111	138	122	135	92	96

The results reflected the shift in residences' practices, flowing from the public accountability and campaigning work Fair Agenda had driven. Following the release of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports more residences were willing to be transparent about their practices in this area, and their responses indicated that many had

improved their training, increasingly involving experts in sexual violence prevention.

In response to correspondence to surveys about the survey, Fair Agenda was told that the process of being surveyed had a positive influence on some residences' policies and priorities.

As a result of doing the survey, we're thinking about changing our provider in order to cover some more bases the survey identified we're missing in terms of our training being best practice.

I have just completed the survey.... I have been in contact with the welfare office at [our university] and we will contact the anti-discrimination commission. I have also looked at the Full Stop Foundation site. Thanks for bringing it to my attention.

Through its survey process and associated campaigning, Fair Agenda was able to drive many residences to improve their policies and practices. These advances that will impact tens of thousands of students, improving their knowledge and capacity to intervene and respond appropriately in cases of sexual violence. Similarly, improved training practices will ensure staff are more appropriately equipped to respond appropriately to students who disclose that they have been affected by sexual violence and lead culture change within residential colleges.

IMPACT OF FAIR AGENDA RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE CAMPAIGN

Specific examples of improvements evident over the course of the Fair Agenda's campaign included:

- Aquinas College shifted from providing no training to students in consent or preventing sexual violence, to providing all students with training in consent and preventing sexual violence, and involving a sexual assault service in that training.
- Iglu Kelvin Grove, Iglu Brisbane, Iglu Broadway, Iglu Central Park, Iglu Central, Iglu Chatswood all shifted from not providing training in consent and preventing sexual violence to any students, to training resident leaders.
- Residences like Kerslake Hall, Christ College, University Apartments, Sandy Bay, John Fisher College, Leprena, Inversek Apartments, West Park Apartments, Newnham Apartments, Investigator Hall and Mount Nelson Villas in Tasmania all shifted from only training student leaders; to training all students. These residences also improved the quality of that training – shifting from not involving a sexual assault service at all, to involving a sexual assault service in training some students.
- International House Darwin, Roseworthy Residential College, Aquinas College, Lincoln College, St Ann's College, St Albert's College, and a number of the University of Melbourne colleges all increased the amount of training provided, to at least two hours per student.
- Swinburne Student Residences, Duchesne College, Lincoln College, Trinity College (University of Western Australia), Kerslake Hall, Christ College, University Apartments, Sandy Bay, John Fisher College, Leprena, Inversek Apartments, West Park Apartments, Newnham Apartments, Investigator Hall, Mount Nelson Villas all shifted from training only some staff responsible for resident welfare, to training all staff with responsibilities in this area.
- Iglu Kelvin Grove, Iglu Brisbane, Iglu Broadway, Iglu Central Park, Iglu Central, Iglu Chatswood all moved from not involving a sexual assault service in staff training to having their in-house trainer trained by a sexual assault service.

Tailored training programs developed and delivered by individual institutions

With increased awareness around sexual violence in Australia university settings, universities and residential colleges increasingly developed and delivered their own training programs around sexual violence response and prevention to their staff, student leader's and orientation programs.

'Re-think day' St Leo's College & Grace College, University of Queensland

In February 2017 *The Hunting Ground* featured in an innovative 0-week training program, 'Re-Think Day', run by St Leo's College and Grace College, two residential colleges at the University of Queensland. According to Stephen Foley, Head of St Leo's College

We saw [The Hunting Ground] as a launch pad to educate our all-male college in a way we hadn't previously.

The 2017 'Re-Think' Day was developed by staff at St Leo's College who recognised the need to address issues around respectful relationships, evolving gender roles, sexual diversity awareness and inclusion, sexual communication and consent with their incoming students.

Mark Thornton, Deputy Head of College at St Leo's, explained:

The certainty that we needed this program arose from conversations with residents which showed that they were poorly informed about many of the issues surrounding sexual assault and diverse sexual orientation... The program is designed to promote respect for others in relationships, respect for diverse lifestyles and respect for themselves. It is educational, values driven and challenges stereotypes.

Around 200 first year students participated in a roster of four workshops, concluding with a screening of the one hour international version of *The Hunting Ground* and a panel discussion involving the workshop presenters and a former resident of St Leo's College.

College staff emphasised the services and support available to residents.

The Principal at Grace College, the Rev Dr Anita Monro, was pleased with the day's outcomes, commenting: "Grace College residents felt empowered by the opportunity to discuss issues that have a profound effect on their health, safety and wellbeing."

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO THE *CHANGE THE COURSE* AND *ON SAFE GROUND* REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Both the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports placed strong emphasis on the need for increased, expert-led training for staff and students.

Recommendation 2 of the *Change the Course* report stated that universities should provide students and staff with education about “behaviours that constitute sexual assault and sexual harassment, consent and respectful relationships, ‘violence supportive attitudes’ and bystander intervention.” The Commission recommended that such education programs should be based on best practice and research, developed and delivered by individuals and/or organisations with expertise in sexual violence prevention and in consultation with university students, be targeted at all levels of the organisation, and include evaluation measures.

Recommendation 5 further provided that universities should identify staff members and student representatives most likely to receive disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment and ensure that these staff and student receive training, delivered by an organisation with specialist expertise, in responding to such disclosures.

The *On Safe Ground* report considered both first responders and the broader need for preventative programs, recommending that relevant university staff “should be fully apprised of university policies and available student support services and should be trained to respond sensitively and appropriately to disclosures and reports of sexual assault and harassment.” Recommendation 15 provided that residential college staff and students in leadership roles “should be trained to sensitively manage the concerns and needs of victims of sexual assault and harassment, friends/ associates, bystanders and alleged perpetrators.” Recommendation 16 stated that Australian universities and residential colleges should implement evidence-based sexual violence prevention education programs that are “specifically designed for the student-university environment, relevant and applicable to diverse student groups, and delivered by professionally trained experts.” Similar to the Commission, the *On Safe Ground* report emphasised that “programs should be regularly evaluated to ensure ongoing utility.”

As noted earlier, following the release of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, universities reported on five separate occasions to the Commission and the national higher education regulator, TEQSA, on their implementation of the recommendations.

The AHRC's review of initial university responses to the *Change the Course* recommendations, in December 2017, found that all 39 universities reported implementing, or a commitment to implement, training and education in relation to sexual assault, sexual harassment and respectful relationships to some or all of their students (in line with Recommendation 2, above) and 36 universities reported acting to implement Recommendation 5, identifying and providing training to staff members and student representatives most likely to receive disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment.¹⁰⁴

In its January 2019 *Report to the Minister*, TEQSA found that:

- 93% of universities reported offering face to face training for students and staff, usually delivered by external experts working in sexual assault services.
- *Consent Matters* online training was offered to students in 62% of universities and was mandatory at 10 universities.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ AHRC, *Audit of university responses to the Change the course report - Snapshot of progress: December 2017*, op cit.

¹⁰⁵ TEQSA, *Report to the Minister*, op cit.

GREATER NATIONAL REGULATORY ATTENTION ON THE ISSUE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENTS

Australia's national higher education regulator, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), was established in July 2011 to administer the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* and the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015*. While some of the Threshold Standards cover relevant issues such as student wellbeing and safety and student complaints, the management and prevention of sexual violence in university settings was never a specific objective of the Threshold Standards or TEQSA's regulatory approach.

However, in the wake of the publication of the *Change the Course* and *On Safe Ground* reports, and a direction from then Minister for Education Senator Simon Birmingham, TEQSA sought to introduce greater oversight to Australia's higher education sector in relation to its handling of campus sexual violence.

TEQSA responded immediately to the release of the two reports in August 2017 welcoming both reports and highlighting the legislative requirement in the Threshold Standards that all higher education providers must offer students a safe environment.¹⁰⁶

TEQSA GUIDANCE MATERIALS

TEQSA subsequently developed several publications detailing the regulator's expectations of higher education providers in relation to the management and prevention of sexual violence.

The AHRCentre's *On Safe Ground* report had recommended the development by TEQSA of Guidance Notes in relation to existing Standards 2.3 (Wellbeing and Safety) and 2.4 (Student Grievances and Complaints) of the Higher Education Standards Framework (2015) "to provide greater clarity to universities in interpreting and applying these

¹⁰⁶ Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), 'Regulator welcomes university wide response to sexual assault', *Media release*, 1 August 2017; Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), 'Sector guidance to ensure safe campuses', *Media release*, 4 August 2017.

Standards as they relate to Australian university efforts to address and prevent sexual violence.”¹⁰⁷

THGAP and EROC Australia both provided submissions to TEQSA’s consultation process regarding the *Guidance Note on Wellbeing and Safety* (Standard 2.3), which was finalised by TEQSA and released in January 2018.¹⁰⁸ The *Guidance Note* made clear that higher education providers’ responsibilities to foster an environment of wellbeing and safety for their students, under the Threshold Standards, included “conducting evidence-based sexual violence, drug and alcohol abuse prevention education programs”¹⁰⁹ and providing “an appropriate and effective response” to incidents occurring “on campus, off campus or online”.¹¹⁰ In relation to supported affiliated entities (such as residences and university colleges), the *Guidance Note* provided that:

*Providers should actively use their influence and governance links to ... promote and foster a safe environment for students enrolled at the provider. There are particular risks posed by recurring sexual assault and sexual harassment at residences, and providers should use their best offices to encourage residences to implement counter-measures, such as evidence-based sexual violence prevention education programs, as well as programs to counter the harmful effects of alcohol and drug abuse.*¹¹¹

In February 2019, TEQSA released its *Guidance Note on Student Grievances and Complaints* (Standard 2.4). Aimed at providing guidance to higher education providers and helping students to understand what they can expect from providers, it relevantly provided:

Grievances about particularly sensitive issues (such as assault and sexual harassment) may require more specific approaches, and TEQSA will need to be satisfied that a provider’s processes and staffing allocations are appropriate to deal with these matters.

Dealing with grievances about sexual assault and sexual harassment requires an especially clear reporting and response

¹⁰⁷ Recommendation 2: Durbach and Keith, *On Safe Ground*, op cit.

¹⁰⁸ Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), *Guidance Note: Wellbeing and Safety*, Version 1.2, 8 January 2018, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/guidance-note-wellbeing-and-safety>

¹⁰⁹ *ibid*, p.2.

¹¹⁰ *ibid*, p.5.

¹¹¹ *ibid*, pp.1-2.

*pathway that offers students choices about how the information provided by them will be processed and responded to ... The student decides whether an incident is reported to the police.*¹¹²

TEQSA emphasised that university information about complaints processes must be accessible and clearly communicated¹¹³ and required that universities have processes in place “for analysis and monitoring of complaints handling to generate improvements and implement preventative mechanisms where possible.”¹¹⁴

In July 2020, TEQSA published its *Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector*,¹¹⁵ featuring practical advice for higher education providers to support improvements in their policies, procedures, and practices. The *Good Practice Note* outlined nine principles including staff and student focused responses; leadership and governance to ensure institution-wide action; comprehensive, inclusive policies and procedures implemented by well-trained staff; accessible and timely support; and fair, timely and effective incident reporting options and responses. The *Good Practice Note* provided a checklist of items corresponding to each principle and included a selection of “good practice examples” from Australian higher education providers.

TEQSA'S REPORT TO THE MINISTER

Following the release of the *Change the Course* report in August 2018 then Education Minister Birmingham requested that universities “outline how they are managing risks regarding sexual assault and sexual harassment” in light of the report’s findings and recommendations.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), *Guidance Note: Grievance and Complaint Handling*, Version 1.1, 22 February 2019, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/for-providers/resources/guidance-note-grievance-and-complaint-handling>, pp.4-5.

¹¹³ *ibid*, p.5.

¹¹⁴ *ibid*.

¹¹⁵ Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), *Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector*, 9 July 2020, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/good-practice-note-preventing-and-responding-sexual-assault-and-sexual>

¹¹⁶ Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education, ‘University Sexual Assault And Sexual Harassment’, *Media release*, 1 August 2017, <https://ministers.education.gov.au/birmingham/minister-statement-university-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment>; Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), ‘No place for sexual assault in higher education’, *Media Release*, 22 February 2018.

In January 2019 TEQSA released its *Report to the Minister for Education: Higher education sector response to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment: An overview of Australian higher education provider responses to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment*¹¹⁷ which collated submissions TEQSA had received from universities and other higher education providers. While TEQSA concluded that there were “some gaps” to follow up, they assessed that universities had “largely implemented the recommendations of the AHRC’s *Change the Course* report” and were “by and large, actively responding to the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment.”¹¹⁸



¹¹⁷ Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), TEQSA publishes review of higher education sector’s response to sexual assault, *Media Release*, 25 January 2019 and TEQSA, *Report to the Minister*, *op cit*.

¹¹⁸ TEQSA, *Report to the Minister for Education*, *op cit*, p.11.

REPORT TO THE MINISTER'S KEY FINDINGS

The *Report to the Minister* covered 42 universities, including public and private universities, and was organised against the key themes in the *Change the Course* recommendations. TEQSA reported that, as at November 2018:¹¹⁹

Leadership and governance

- All universities had established, or planned to establish, a taskforce/advisory body on sexual assault and sexual harassment
 - 10 university vice-chancellors (24%) led their institution's taskforce
 - 35 university taskforces (85%) had student representation.
- 39 universities (93%) had policies on sexual assault and sexual harassment, with 12 universities (29%) having standalone policies.
- 18 universities (43%) had a policy guiding interaction between postgraduate students and staff.
- 39 universities had conducted (or were in the process of conducting) a review of existing university policies and response pathways in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment
 - 20 universities (51%) of the reviews were independent or conducted by an external party.

Changing attitudes and behaviours

- 38 universities (91%) had a *Respect. Now. Always.* webpage providing access to information about available support services and educational programs.
- 39 universities (93%) offered online training around issues including behaviours that constitute sexual assault and sexual harassment, consent and respectful relationships, violence-supportive attitudes, and bystander intervention
 - 26 universities (62%) used *Consent Matters* online training for students

¹¹⁹ *ibid*, pp. 6-9 and Appendix 2.

- 39 universities (93%) offered face-to-face training for student leaders and staff, usually delivered by external experts working in sexual assault services.

Procedures for responding

- All universities provided access to counselling services.
 - 29 universities (69%) had conducted a review of their counselling services following the *Change the Course* report.
- 41 universities (98%) provide contact details for emergency sexual assault services.
- 39 universities (93%) had a relationship with external providers of sexual assault services.
- 16 universities (38%) had a dedicated student wellbeing policy ensuring that students who experienced adverse events were supported academically and in their emotional wellbeing.

Monitoring and evaluation

- All universities reported that they internally report data on incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment and nine universities (21%) demonstrated evidence of public reporting this data.

Residential colleges and student accommodation

- Of the 34 universities with accommodation, 29 universities (85%) had conducted a review of residential services with respect to preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment occurring at residential services.

REGULATORY OVERSIGHT OF UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

TEQSA also instigated several regulatory mechanisms to monitor university responses.

In the wake of the release of EROC Australia's *The Red Zone Report* in February 2018 and a subsequent surge in media attention on campus sexual violence and hazing, TEQSA announced in June 2018 that all renewals of higher education provider registration applications (required at least every seven years) would henceforth include a core assessment of the Student Wellbeing and Safety Standards.¹²⁰ TEQSA's media release stated that "the higher education regulator is seeking assurance that all providers are fostering safe environments and supporting students in need." Between June 2018 and June 2020 TEQSA undertook 20 such registration-related investigations of the quality of SASH prevention and response measures, covering 14 universities.¹²¹

TEQSA also opened up a complaints mechanism to student survivors and their advocate after EROC Australia lodged a test complaint with TEQSA, on behalf of a student, on 8 September 2017. The complaint – the first ever made against an Australian university to TEQSA around these issues – was focused on the University of Tasmania failing to comply with several of the Threshold Standards, after the complainant had unsuccessfully pursued action with the university for almost 18 months.

Between September 2017 and 30 November 2022, TEQSA had finalised 29 such complaints into university mishandling of student sexual violence cases, with a further four investigations pending.¹²² On occasion, TEQSA has also initiated its own inquiries in response to media reports, contacting universities to request information around what actions the institutions were taking in response to the reports.¹²³

¹²⁰ Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), 'Wellbeing and safety standards set to be assessed', *Media Release*, 4 June 2018, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/articles/wellbeing-and-safety-standards-set-be-assessed>

¹²¹ TEQSA advised that "assessments occurred twice for four universities as the timing of their renewal of registration allowed the full process to be followed." Senate Standing Committees on Education and Employment, Parliament of Australia, *Budget Estimates 2022-23*, Question on Notice SQ22-000173.

¹²² Commonwealth of Australia, Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment, *Question on Notice: Budget Estimates 2022-2023*, Question on Notice SQ20-000390.

¹²³ Question on Notice SQ18-000222, *op cit*.

IMPACT: INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

“The Hunting Ground Australia Project was really transformative in the space of university sexual assault in Australia... not only through the first national student survey and the first-of-its-kind data we had around the actual prevalence of this issue and the experience of students, but also in helping to drive media attention, engagement and awareness of how this issue was manifesting and the institutional failures from universities in prevention and response.”

Renee Carr, Fair Agenda

Key activities pursued by the THGAP impact campaign contributed to increased institutional, political and media awareness and understanding around the prevalence of sexual violence in Australia university environments, prompting the introduction by universities and residential colleges of enhanced support services for student survivors and more visible and robust policies, procedures and training aimed at managing and preventing campus sexual violence. These efforts were accompanied by strengthened national regulatory mechanisms led by TEQSA, the higher education regulator.

PROJECT IMPACT: POSITIVELY CHANGING CAMPUS CULTURES TO REDUCE INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT

“I think the overall impact of The Hunting Ground Australia Project is probably immeasurable, I don’t think we’re yet to see the true overall impact of it, I think we’re still seeing that play out. But I think the biggest impact for me personally is that this was an issue that suddenly had a national platform. The Project itself pushed this issue to the top of the national agenda and we saw it being discussed in parliament, we saw federal politicians paying attention for the first time. And we’ve seen now a concerted effort from universities to continue that work, five years down the track.”

Sharna Bremner, End Rape on Campus Australia

With the support of our funders and partners, The Hunting Ground Australia Project was a highly effective catalyst for change.

Alongside ongoing student and activist campaigning, campus screenings of *The Hunting Ground* at 33 of 39 Australian universities helped to shift attitudes amongst university and residential colleges leaders, the media and governments, establishing sexual violence in Australian university environments as an issue requiring institutional attention.

THGAP was the instigator in establishing national baseline data on the incidence of sexual violence in Australian universities and residential colleges, as published in the landmark Australian Human Rights Commission’s *Change the Course* report. Prior to the THGAP impact campaign there was no comprehensive, independent and sector-wide statistics available around the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual

harassment in Australian university settings, nor any information about how universities and colleges managed these issues.

Commissioned by THGAP, the Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW developed a comprehensive good practice guide for application in Australian universities and the Full Stop Foundation adapted existing ethics and sexual consent training programs to the Australian university context, delivering workshops around the country.

Providing support to Fair Agenda, THGAP contributed to significant improvements in the quantity and quality of sexual violence prevention training provided by university residential colleges.

The campaign's impact team and partners collaborated with journalists and writers to produce regular media coverage in national news outlets.

After decades of advocacy efforts by student survivors, women's groups and sexual assault services being largely ignored, THGAP's impact campaign – with its partners and collaborators – was able to overcome initial resistance in the Australian university sector to prompt action.

The university and residential college peaks Universities Australia and University Colleges Australia created national campaigns and resources to guide their sector. Australian universities have been required to regularly report against the Commission's *Change the Course* recommendations to government agencies. Individual universities and residential colleges have introduced new policies, procedures and training to manage and prevent sexual violence within their institutions.

The national higher education regulator TEQSA has developed detailed guidance materials to higher education providers and started to investigate complaints from student survivors.

The THGAP campaign had considerable impact in positively changing campus cultures to reduce incidents of sexual assault and harassment – but more needs to be done.

A second follow up survey, the National Student Safety Survey (NSSS), committed to by Universities Australia in 2017 and undertaken in 2021, was released in March 2022. The NSSS unfortunately indicated a concerning lack of progress in both reducing campus sexual violence prevalence rates and increasing student's confidence in reporting mechanisms and university support services.

With a new federal government elected in May 2022, THGAP campaign partners EROC Australia and Fair Agenda continue to push for greater accountability around university responses to campus based sexual violence, actively engaging in the University Accord process and lobbying political leaders.

“It’s a credit to the student and community activists that all 39 universities came together to face the realities of student sexual harassment and assault in 2016, the year before the global #MeToo movement. Now all workplaces know they must act on sexual harassment.” ¹²⁴

Kate Jenkins
Sex Discrimination Commissioner
2016-2023

Universities Australia apologises to victims as it releases National Student Safety Survey into sexual assault and harassment

By Niki Burnside

Posted Wed 23 Mar 2022 at 1:32pm, updated Thu 24 Mar 2022 at 10:43am



¹²⁴ Australian Human Rights Commission, Twitter, 25 March 2023.

The topic of sexual violence can trigger traumatic memories for survivors. Survivors have the right to talk about their experiences on their own terms. If you sense that a survivor needs additional support, contact the national hotlines:

1800 RESPECT

Free and confidential 24/7 National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service.

Call **1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)** and ask to speak to a trauma counsellor.

www.1800respect.org.au

To find services visit:

www.1800respect.org.au/services

LIFELINE – CRISIS SUPPORT

24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services.

13 11 44

www.lifeline.org.au

MENSLINE

Free and confidential 24/7 professional telephone and online support and information service for Australian men.

1300 789 978

www.mensline.org.au

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency Services: **000**

Police Assistance (non-emergency): **131 444**

If you are a survivor and would like to reach out to other university students and supporters:

END RAPE ON CAMPUS (EROC) AUSTRALIA

EROC Australia works to end sexual violence at universities and residential colleges through direct support for survivors and their communities; prevention through education; and policy reform at the campus, state, and federal levels.

www.endrapeoncampusau.org

If you want to make a complaint in relation to an incident:

AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (AHRC)

The AHRC can investigate complaints regarding sexual harassment and discrimination at universities, and attempts to resolve complaints through conciliation.

www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints

STATE & TERRITORY ANTI-DISCRIMINATION BODIES

Sexual harassment complaints can also be made to local state/territory anti-discriminatory bodies.

www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/human-rights-and-anti-discrimination/australias-anti-discrimination-law

OMBUDSMAN'S OFFICES

Where a survivor believes that a university has acted unfairly or otherwise mismanaged a sexual violence case, they may be able to make complaints to an Ombudsman office. Complaints about public universities and higher education providers can be made to the relevant state/territory Ombudsman.

International students can make complaints regarding private higher education providers to the Overseas Students Ombudsman.

www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/international-student-complaints

THE HUNTING GROUND AUSTRALIA PROJECT

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GOOD PITCH AUSTRALIA

Shark Island Institute and Documentary Australia Foundation host GOOD PITCH² AUSTRALIA, and brought the first of these events to Sydney in October 2014. Since the inaugural event Good Pitch Australia has raised over \$14 million in philanthropic funding. This funding has contributed to both production and outreach funding, and has entirely financed the development and implementation of social impact campaigns, targeting a diversity of issues central to society – now and into the future.

The results have been impressive: contribution to policy, the forging of 200+ powerful strategic partnerships and alliances between community groups, the corporate sector, NGOs and policy makers; the creation of tools around issues to raise awareness and give people a way to practically engage with life-changing behaviours, attitudes and action.

These results represent a high return on social capital for our philanthropic community.

www.thehuntinggroundaustralia.com.au

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