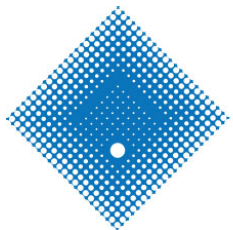




Australian
Human Rights
Commission

Response to *Change the Course* Recommendations 1–9

March 2019



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

Implementation of recommendations from *Change the course: National report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities*

University name: Victoria University, Melbourne		
Recommendation no.	Action already taken	Planned/future action
1 (Leadership and governance)	<p>In August 2016, the Vice-Chancellor and President of Victoria University, Professor Peter Dawkins, launched the <u>Prevention of Violence Against Women Ten Point Plan</u>. The Plan and its governance structure in its entirety align with Recommendation 1 of the Change the Course report, as they outline a university-wide program of governance, leadership, community linkage and education in the prevention of violence against women.</p> <p>The Respect and Responsibility program was set up and funded to give effect to this Plan and is now responsible for reporting against the Change the Course recommendations.</p> <p>Specific actions taken by the University that address Recommendation 1 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2016, a Reference Group was convened to support the establishment of the Respect and Responsibility, Preventing Violence Against Women 2016-2019 Ten Point Plan. The reference group included: senior leaders from the University; academic experts in gender equality and violence prevention initiatives from both VU and other universities; experts in the field of PVAW education; the heads of Security, Safer Community, Counselling, Legal Services, Student Services and People and Culture at VU; the VUSU Women's Officer; representatives from the NTEU and Victorian Trades Hall Council; and a representative from Victoria Police. 	<p>Reporting against the first Ten Point Plan is due in 2019, and the next 3-year iteration of the Plan will be produced in 2019.</p> <p>The University will continue to utilise the robust structures already established, and pursue and deepen co-design and consultation opportunities with students in developing new initiatives.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In May 2016, the Vice-Chancellor launched the Respect. Now. Always. campaign at Victoria University with the President of VUSU and the Chief Operating Officer of the University. About 50 staff and students attended. The launch was followed by a series of screenings of the documentary <i>The Hunting Ground</i>, followed by panel discussions involving University and community leaders. Approximately 150 staff, students and community members attended these forums. • In August 2016, the Ten Point Plan was launched and publicised throughout the University by the Vice-Chancellor and senior leadership. • In 2017, a Staff Steering Group and a Student Committee were established and convened by the Senior Program Manager, Respect and Responsibility to provide implementation oversight and support. • The University's Gender Equity Committee was established in 2016. It is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and meets quarterly. The Senior Program Manager, Respect and Responsibility is a member of the committee, and implementation status reports from Respect and Responsibility are standing agenda items for the committee. • Respect and Responsibility status implementation reports are presented annually to Academic Board and the University Council's Committee of Audit and Risk. • The Senior Program Manager, Respect and Responsibility reports to both the Vice-Chancellor and the Vice-President, Planning, Registrar and University Secretary. • Funding has been made available by the University for the staff and activities of the Respect and Responsibility program, including in 2018 the employment of an additional staff member within the program. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The University's leadership in this space has been recognised by the inclusion of Victoria University in significant community partnerships in the western suburbs of Melbourne, including the Preventing Violence Together 2030 Strategy implementation committee and Executive Governing Group, as well as by Victorian government grants of funding. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Dawkins, hosts an annual leadership event during the 16 Days of Activism. At the 2018 luncheon, keynote speaker Tasneem Chopra spoke of the need to challenge sexist attitudes and structures "from grassroots to governance", and her speech was very well-received by the audience of approximately 50 student activists, staff members, university leaders and community partners. On the first anniversary of the release of the Change the Course Report, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Marcia Devlin, and Victoria University Student Union representatives joined members of the Academic Board to walk together in solidarity to the launch of a mural celebrating women's resilience that had been painted on the preceding International Women's Day. 	
<p>2</p> <p>(Changing attitudes and behaviours)</p>	<p>Victoria University, through the Respect and Responsibility program, has embarked on an ambitious plan of education, resource development and leadership in the primary prevention of violence against women, through addressing the drivers of sexual assault and sexual harassment.</p> <p>Specific actions in 2017–2018 that address Recommendation 2 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment and maintenance of student and staff Respect and Responsibility Committees to support initial implementation of the recommendations and develop a framework. 	<p>Continue the traditions newly established of active University participation in and funding of key annual events aimed at challenging sexist stereotypes, including International Women's Day, the anniversary of</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of partnerships with organisations in the western suburbs of Melbourne who also work in primary prevention. Highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnering with AMES Australia to develop the inaugural Preventing Violence Against Women Leadership Program. Graduates included five VU students and staff. This program provides participants with the knowledge and skills required to become leaders in Preventing Violence Against Women (PVAW) in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The program has continued in 2018, with VU involvement. Importantly, Victoria University has nurtured the 2017 graduates as they take action to emerge as PVAW leaders within their communities. ○ Participation in Women's Health West 16 Days Activist Challenge, as part of the University's inaugural participation in the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in 2017. ○ Active participation in the regional partnership Preventing Violence Together 2030 strategy implementation committee and Executive Governance Group. ○ Supporting the HealthWest Partnership to receive a grant of \$140,000 from the Victorian government Free from Violence Fund to work with 20 male VU students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to increase their awareness and ability to take community action against gender-based violence. • Partnering with and supporting student initiatives in promoting gender equality and primary prevention, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Victoria University Student Union (VUSU)-hosted International Women's Day 2017 event that focused on the impact of violence against women with an intersectional cultural lens. Over 50 students and staff attended. 	<p>the Change the Course Recommendations, Women in Higher Education Week, Reclaim the Night and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.</p> <p>Post evaluation through the Randomised Control Trial of the Bystander Awareness and Action e-learning module, roll out for all students Respectful Relationships module incorporating gender inequality, bystander action and consent.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funding of a student- and staff-painted mural at the University's main campus, in partnership with VUSU, on the theme of "Reclaiming our spaces, reclaiming our voices" for International Women's Day 2018. ○ The Victoria University Postgraduate Association (VUPA)-hosted International Women's Day event focused on Gender Equity. Presenters included VU Alumni and industry representatives. The event was attended by over 30 staff and students and was streamed live on Facebook, with 293 views. ○ Collaborating with the VU student social media team to create an International Women's Day video, focusing on gender equality, with the theme Be Bold For Change. This video has had 4,742 views and has been shared across the community including by external organisations and by VU clubs, students and staff pages https://www.facebook.com/victoria.university/videos/1226203530781299/ ○ 'Love Shouldn't Hurt' – an event hosted by Victoria University Polytechnic students. The forum focused on raising awareness of the prevalence of sexual assault and provided information and resources for staff and community members experiencing domestic violence. ○ The Respect and Responsibility Student Engagement Officer hosted a guest lecture for community development students at Victoria University Polytechnic in 2018. ○ Respect and Responsibility staff supported VU Polytechnic Community Services students in September 2018 to hold a public forum on family violence as part of their coursework. ○ Facilitated and supported a student/community filmmaking project team to launch the #BreakBoundaries films and to develop an animated 	

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	<p>communication for international students about sexual harassment. https://www.facebook.com/PVAWBB/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support for the launch on International Women's Day 2019 of three videos created by the VUSU Women's Department, titled "The Wonder Woman series", focusing on the stories of three VU students who have survived family violence. The videos have had over 4,000 views since launch: https://www.facebook.com/pg/VUstudentunion/videos/?ref=page_internal ● Development of an eLearning module, co-designed by students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A \$50,000 Victorian government Community Partnership Grant was awarded to the Respect and Responsibility Unit, in partnership with VUSU, in recognition of the University's leadership in primary prevention initiatives. ○ A student engagement officer (student-as-staff) was engaged to work with a reference group of students to guide the development of this resource, which focuses on being an active bystander. ○ The eLearning module was piloted with students and staff during Semester 2, 2018, and the evaluation data from the pilot program is being used to create a staff version of the resource, and drive development of additional resources. ○ The eLearning module is the subject of a randomised control trial in Semester 1 2019, conducted by the Behavioural Insights Team and facilitated by VicHealth. ○ A module focusing on consent and respectful communication is in development. ● Development of information and collateral for students, including 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dedicating the back cover of the Student Diary every year since 2017 to the Respect and Responsibility message, including contact points for safety and reporting. This message is reinforced within the diaries. ○ A multimedia/postcard messaging series in several community languages developed by VU graduates of the AMES leadership course. ○ A postcard series with key messaging on supporting a friend/teammate/classmate who has experienced sexual assault or harassment. ○ Monitoring the content of outside advertising on campus and assisting student representatives to ensure sexist and disrespectful messaging is not displayed. ● Development of training programs for student leaders, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A pilot program to evaluate a Prevention of Violence Against Women 101 education and training program. Modules included Gender Equality, Respectful Relationships and Bystander awareness training. The program was endorsed by student leaders and was included in student orientation in 2018. ○ In collaboration with the College of Sport and Exercise Science, National Tertiary Students Games participants and supporting staff were engaged in a learning program to increase their awareness of, sexual violence, consent and bystander action. Information handbooks and procedures for reporting sexual assault or sexual harassment were revised and updated to focus first on the person experiencing sexual assault rather than incident management. ● Students attending the University's Harmony Day events were engaged in a PVAW awareness forum. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On International Women's Day 2017, the Diversity and Inclusion team within People and Culture led an event for staff, with over 100 staff attending. On International Women's Day 2018, the Diversity and Inclusion Manager, facilitated a panel discussion of Senior Leaders on the theme of "Press for Progress", which was attended by 70 staff. Provision of and participation in activities during Women in Higher Education Week/Bluestocking Week (August 2017–18), in conjunction with VUSU and other sections of the University, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Respectful Relationships seminar that was attended by students and staff in 2017. The seminar aimed to increase awareness of what constitutes a respectful relationship, the preventable nature of violence against women, and understanding how to take bystander action in a range of settings. Sponsoring a lunch forum organised by the student Women's Collective in 2017. Attendance at and promotion of a panel discussion organised by VUSU and the Law students' society at the College of Law in 2018. Inaugurating and maintaining Victoria University's participation in the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence in November and December 2017 and 2018), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating the involvement of VU students and staff in Women's Health West's 16 Days Activist Challenge. VU participants made up 15% of total participants in the challenge in both years. Forming sizeable VU contingents (the only University to do so) in the annual city Walk to End Family Violence Convening Vice-Chancellor's Leadership events, hosted by the Vice-Chancellor, on the theme of Preventing Violence Together. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-sponsoring Women's Financial Empowerment seminars on three VU campuses ○ in 2017, providing support to the Men's Thread community art project and exhibition, which involved local men in learning textile arts and creating a message of anti-violence and respect. In 2018, launching the ThreadIN Respect community textile art program, to be launched during the 2019 16 Days of Activism program. ○ In 2018, convening a forum for Aboriginal women from the western suburbs to speak about family violence and creating culturally safe spaces. ○ Organising a community singing event in Footscray on International Human Rights Day (10 Dec 2018) on the theme of "I Can't Keep Quiet". ● Provision of and participation in activities during the week of International Women's Day, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funding and organising the staff- and student-painted mural at the University's main campus in Footscray, on the theme of "Reclaiming our Spaces, Reclaiming our Voices" in 2018. ○ Participation in the city IWD march in a VU contingent in 2018. ○ Supporting and publicising student union, women's collective and alumni events. ○ Supporting panel discussions organised by the Women In Science and Engineering student club ○ Co-sponsoring a community screening of film <i>Hidden Figures</i> at the University's Metro West campus in 2018, and the film <i>Mary Shelley</i> in conjunction with the Office for Research in 2019. ○ Organising a singing event involving staff, students and community members on the theme "Hear Me Too". 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Semester 2 2018, delivering training in Respectful Relationships, Consent, Being an Active Bystander and Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence to upwards of 300 student leaders. The training was facilitated by external practitioners who are subject matter experts in delivering such training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Semester 1 2019, this training has been included as an integral and mandatory part of all student leader recruitment and development. Development of a co-designed Consent and Respectful Relationships e-learning module has commenced and will be finalised and launched in 2019. Discussions with the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria are continuing, regarding accredited training for staff in line with the Victorian government's new Common Risk Assessment Framework. 	
3 (University responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment)	<p>Victoria University has expended significant effort and staff resources into developing and publicising information about support services for students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or harassment, and ensuring that these services are adequately resourced.</p> <p>Specific actions taken by the University in response to Recommendation 3 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the global communication systems, including social media channels, and the Student Diary to prominently advertise information about support and response services, both on and off campus, to all students Using People and Culture's staff induction and online training system to underline the University's zero tolerance of violence, discrimination and harassment to all new staff, and staff scheduled for refresher course. 	<p>Continue to embed the response and support message in all interactions the University has with new staff and students.</p> <p>Continue to promote the VU SAFE app as a key safety resource</p> <p>Evaluation of how effective the measures take so far have been in increasing awareness</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the global email and announcement systems, to prominently advertise information about support and response services, both on and off campus, to all staff. • Developing a well-regarded phone app, VU SAFE, which enables instant emergency calls to university security or the police, as well as allowing users to book a security escort, access maps and support services information, report concerning behaviour and enable a “Friend Walk”, i.e. give location access to a friend to track a user’s progress home in real time. There have been over 3000 downloads of the VU SAFE app to date. • Prominent presence of Safer Community and Security at all major University events including enrolment, Orientation Festivals, Family Day and Open Days. • Inauguration of monthly lunchtime lectures for frontline staff on issues relating to Safer Communities, such as responding to aggressive behaviour, privacy and dealing with online abuse. • Prominent display of information about sexual harassment throughout the University on official noticeboards. • Information about harassment and assault forms a prominent part of orientation programs for all new Higher Degree by Research students and supervisors. • The <u>Safer Community webpage</u> on the University website is widely linked to from across the website and aggregates easy to use information for all staff and students. It is accessible via a screen reader, and written in plain language. It also allows users to anonymously report concerning behaviour. • Respect and Responsibility have developed postcards, to be widely disseminated to students, which clearly and simply advise how to support a friend or classmate who has experienced sexual assault or harassment, and gives details of support services, including services specifically for Aboriginal 	among staff and students of the services and supports available to people who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment, both on- and off-campus

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	and Torres Strait Islander people, migrants and refugees, and LGBTIQ+ people.	
<p>4</p> <p>(University responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment)</p>	<p>In response to Recommendation 4, Victoria University commissioned an independent expert to lead a review of its existing policies with regard to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Their recommendations have been received and are under consideration at the time of reporting.</p> <p>Consultation on proposed policy changes with the wider VU community (including students) occurred. Procedures and response pathways that align with revised policies have been developed in conjunction with recognised specialists in the field. New Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policies and Procedures have been approved by the Vice-Chancellor and released to the University community.</p> <p>In addition to this review, the Respect and Responsibility team initiated a review of the Team Managers' handbooks for student athletic teams attending the National Tertiary Student Games and the National Indigenous Tertiary Student Games. The guidelines for responding to a person who has experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment have been updated to centre the safety and support of the victim. All students and staff attending these national games have received either training or, at a bare minimum, information about response pathways and support services. Training for all participants in national student games is mandatory from 2019.</p>	<p>Throughout 2019 and beyond, action the Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy and Procedure implementation plan. Aim is to increase awareness and knowledge by embedding policy reference into training and education programs.</p>

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<p>5</p> <p>(University responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment)</p>	<p>In 2016 and 2017, Victoria University assessed which staff members and student representatives were most likely to receive disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment.</p> <p>In response to Recommendation 5, the University commissioned the Western Region Centre Against Sexual Assault (WestCASA) to provide extensive First Responder training to all members of the following staff categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Welfare Officers within the Student Matters Office • Counsellors and psychologists from the Student Counselling Service • Safer Community staff • Security staff, including casual staff • Library Staff • VUHQ Staff <p>In addition, First Responder training was also provided to Respect and Responsibility Program staff members and student committee (which included VUSU representatives), as well as the members of the Student Reference Committee.</p> <p>Discussions have started about the scope of an all-staff online module.</p> <p>Training for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) supervisors and students aligned to the recently released Respectful Relationships training resources developed by the Australian Graduate Research Council, the Council of Australian Post Postgraduate Association and the National Tertiary Education Union, is currently in development and scheduled to be delivered during 2019.</p>	<p>Training and education for responding to disclosures for academic and professional staff is currently in development.</p>

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6 (Monitoring and evaluation)	<p>As part of its commitment to implementing Recommendation 6, the University collects data about all instances of sexual assault or sexual harassment reported by students and staff. The nature and extent of the data is as described in Recommendation 6. This information is stored confidentially and reported to a member of the University's Senior Executive Group on a monthly basis by Safer Community and on a quarterly basis by People and Culture.</p> <p>In addition, some engagement has taken place with the Western Region Centre Against Sexual Assault (WestCASA) about the possibility of their collecting and sharing with the University data on how many VU students have accessed their service. Discussions will continue.</p>	
7 (Monitoring and evaluation)	<p>A four-stage audit of the University Counselling Service that matches the scope of Recommendation 7 commenced in May 2018 and was completed in the last quarter of 2018.</p> <p>The completion of the audit has occurred and the University is committed to giving effect to all recommendations of the audit report, so as to enable the University's Counselling Service to respond appropriately and promptly to all matters of sexual violence notified to the service.</p>	<p>Exploring training options with CASA House for more targeted and comprehensive training for staff in the University Counselling Service in identifying trauma associated with Sexual Harm and including a therapeutic lens for identifying this trauma early so as to</p>

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		provide timely referral to specialist agencies.
8 (Monitoring and evaluation)	Victoria University supports the collective efforts within the sector, led by Universities Australia, to build on the work of <i>Change the Course</i> and to continue to track progress in reducing the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment on campus.	
9 (Residential colleges and university residences)	<p>Victoria University students have only one on-campus residence option, which is the privately operated UniLodge residence opposite the main campus in Footscray.</p> <p>As part of its commitment to implementing Recommendation 9, Victoria University has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided training and resources from Safer Community to UniLodge staff and managers on responding to disclosures of sexual harassment and assault. • Funded training for all UniLodge Residential Advisors (RAs) delivered by a specialist sexual assault counsellor. The training focuses on Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Harm and provides a trauma-informed framework for understanding the drivers and prevalence of sexual assault, information on supporting survivors that is tailored to the RAs' specific roles and responsibilities and self-care techniques. This training will take place at the beginning of each semester. • Provided resources for UniLodge to display promoting support and reporting of sexual assault and harassment at the University and externally. 	<p>Sexual assault resistance education to be offered to new residents from 2020.</p> <p>UniLodge handbook to be reviewed and updated mid-2019.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established with UniLodge management that any serious incidents within its VU residence must be reported to University management. Sexual assault and sexual harassment are both defined as serious incidents in the University's agreement with UniLodge. Regular meetings take place between UniLodge management and senior University staff. This process is continuously monitored, and is currently working. Encouraged, at a management level, UniLodge to address the full scope of Recommendation 9 across its many residences Australia-wide. <p>In addition, a Victoria University researcher has recently been awarded a significant Victorian government grant to undertake a research project aimed at "empowering female students to experience equality and respect in their residential college relationships and empower all students in those settings to speak out against violence knowing they will be supported". The project is supported by key stakeholders in the university residential sector.</p>	