Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence

Ensure all student-facing staff and student leaders are equipped with the practical knowledge and skills needed to provide an effective and survivor-centred first response to disclosures.
Ensure staff and student leaders are confident at providing effective and empathetic support when receiving a disclosure.

Updated to reflect a broader focus on gender-based violence, *Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence* features new content covering staff-to-student and peer-to-peer misconduct, and expanded coverage of image-based abuse, including how to recognise it, and how to provide support to individuals experiencing it. The overall approach of the programme has also been updated to be more trauma-informed, shifting the emphasis from reporting, to responding and providing support.

- Ensure staff are confident in responding to disclosures in line with institutional policy to avoid any mishandling that could cause harm to individuals disclosing
- Provide consistent training across different staff roles and departments
- Promote a safer university community that’s more informed for discussions about changing the culture of sexual violence at universities, and able to take practical steps towards positive cultural change
- Deliver a blended approach to learning when used alongside existing workshop initiatives
- Encourage discussion of, and attention to, the importance of considering intersectionality when receiving a disclosure and providing support

**Programme structure**

*3 streamlined modules of around 30 minutes each, accessible in a time and manner that is best for the Learner(s)*

- **Module 1: Setting the context**
- **Module 2: Understanding and supporting survivors**
- **Module 3: Steps to take when responding**

The new version will offer further benefits:

- **Module 3 is available in a shortened version with two screens removed, allowing a flexible approach to a complex subject, and tailoring the level of information to the learner(s)**
- **Updated content to reflect changes in the field including:**
  - Reduced focus on reporting, with greater attention on disclosing and support
  - Staff-to-Student and Staff-to-Staff scenarios
  - Increased discussion of gender-based violence (GBV)
  - Increased consideration of disclosures from LGBT+ individuals

**Multimedia activities – including videos, animations, and polls** - promote a safer university community that’s more informed for discussions about changing the culture of sexual violence at universities

A ‘Hide content’ button on each screen to help learners navigate modules with potentially triggering themes

‘Support’ pods contain information and links signposting the Learner to support resources

Content warnings at the start of each module and before any potentially triggering activities

Nuanced examples and activities encourage Learners to reflect on contemporary issues in greater depth

A fresh and engaging new design

The impacts of sexual violence

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Meet our Author Team

Lead Advisor
Professor Nicola Henry (she/her) is an Australian Research Council (ARC) Future Fellow in the Social and Global Studies Centre at RMIT University (Melbourne, Australia). Her research investigates the nature and impacts of sexual violence, including legal and non-legal responses to these harms. Her current research focuses on technology-facilitated abuse and image-based sexual abuse.

Author
Dr Rachel Loney-Howes (she/her) is a criminologist at the University of Wollongong, Australia. Rachel is a co-investigator on a foundational study exploring alternative and informal reporting options for survivors of sexual assault. She is the author of Online anti-rape activism: Exploring the politics of the personal in the age of digital media (2020, Emerald Press) available for free via Open Access. She is also the co-editor of #MeToo and the politics of social change (2019, Palgrave McMillan) with Dr Bianca Fileborn.

Drawing on expertise from organisations, student services, and subject matter experts, our expert panel has helped shape every aspect of our updated programme. Meet the expert panel on our website.

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