
**REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA ACTIVITY IN ADDRESSING
GENDER BASED VIOLENCE**

FINAL REPORT MARCH 2024

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BACKGROUND: THE PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS DOCUMENT

In 2023, the University of Tasmania (UTAS) contracted Lyn Walker and Associates to undertake a review of its activity in responding to and preventing sexual violence. During establishment of the project, it was agreed that a report would be submitted to UTAS with the purpose of identifying:

- activity undertaken through conduct of the review;
- the range of issues arising which require consideration by UTAS; and
- recommendations regarding future activity UTAS may wish to undertake to further develop this work.

Reports of this nature often contain content regarding the prevalence, nature, dynamics and drivers of gender-based violence (GBV); the research, policy and practice base informing contemporary approaches to addressing this violence, and the social, economic and political environment which may impact on further developments in this arena. Given the plethora of documents which present this overview, we now know that GBV is prevalent, has significant impacts on individuals, families and the wider community, and is preventable. We also know that whilst women and girls are the predominant victims of this violence and men are the predominant perpetrators, specific segments of our population experience higher levels of violence. This includes Aboriginal people, those with a disability and LGBTIQ+ people. Therefore, adoption of an intersectional lens to guide work in both responding to and preventing GBV is fundamental to best practice in this area and is inherent in this report.

The report is presented in three sections with the first section identifying the review methodology. The second section, structured in a table format:

- Identifies high level objectives relevant to adopting a whole-of-University approach in both responding to and preventing GBV, which UTAS may wish to take forward;
- Makes comment on current UTAS activity addressing GBV;
- Recommends future activities needed to meet the requirements of current government reforms, and to ensure that UTAS continues to progress toward implementation of a best practice approach in this arena; and
- Identifies the anticipated short-to-medium term outcomes required of this body of work.

The conclusion then draws together the themes arising from the review and makes comment on outcomes that could be anticipated in the longer term.

Changes that have taken place since the review commenced.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Education, released *Addressing Gender- Based Violence in Higher Education Draft Action Plan* in late 2023. This draft action plan foreshadowed increased focus on activity taking place across Australian Universities which would advance sector-wide work in both responding to, and preventing, gender-based violence. Thus, this document has adopted the term gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence refers to violence that is used against someone because of their gender. It describes violence rooted in gender-based power inequalities, rigid gender norms and gender-based discrimination. While people of all genders can experience gender-based violence, the term is most often used to describe violence against women and girls, because most gender-based violence is perpetrated by men against women, because they are women. Violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual, financial and technology-facilitated abuse (including image-based abuse), and stalking. The term gender-based violence includes violence perpetrated against LGBTIQ+ people. It is recognized that there are shared drivers of gender-based violence and violence against LGBTIQ+ people, but that violence against the latter is also driven by rigid and hierarchical ideas about sex, gender and sexuality. (Australian Government Department of Education Draft Action Plan 2023)

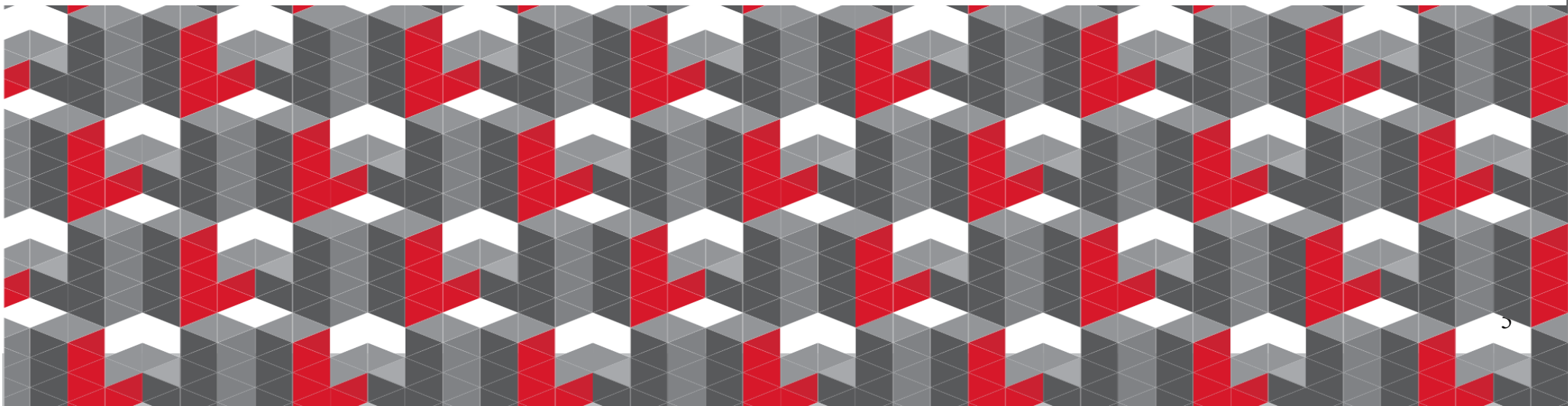
As the review focused on UTAS activity in relation to sexual violence, it was determined that future UTAS activity in addressing GBV would also focus on Intimate Partner Violence / Relationship Violence / Dating Violence. Consequently, a recommendation is made regarding the conduct of a “short snapshot review” to ensure UTAS work in addressing Intimate Partner Violence / Relationship Violence / Dating Violence is made visible in forthcoming strategies, operational plans and activities.

In late February 2024, the Australian Government Department of Education released its final *Action Plan Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education (the Action Plan 2024)*. Subsequently a review of this action plan was undertaken to ensure UTAS alignment with Australian Government directions. It should be noted that the *Action Plan 2024* is a high-level document. The next steps of the Department of Education will be to work with Universities across Australia to design and implement a ‘Higher Education Code’ which will provide explicit detail on all actions that Universities will be expected to design, implement and monitor under this new Code.

Annual reporting on activity undertaken and progress made under the Code will be expected from Universities. The Department of Education will then report annually on progress to parliament. It should also be noted that as a consequence of the introduction of this new Code, at a date to be determined, the content of UTAS strategies and operational plans may require review and some amendment.



SECTION ONE: METHODOLOGY



1.1 Review of National research, policies, plans and best practice resources

In order to establish a solid foundation for the review, meetings were conducted with senior members of the University to identify the scope and terms of reference for the work. Resource material focusing on best practice in responding to and preventing sexual violence, relevant to the University setting, was then sourced to assist assessment of the extent to which UTAS activity reflects best practice in this domain and to identify areas requiring further development. Resource material drawn on includes:

- CASA House 1989: *Breaking the Silence: A Guide to supporting victim / survivors of sexual assault*, which outlines a model of service delivery for those subjected to sexual assault. The resource has been used to support delivery of Bachelor of Social Work curriculum across a range of Universities.
- VicHealth 2007: *Preventing Violence Against Women: A Framework and Action Plan*, which informed development of Victoria's approach to preventing violence against women and facilitated state and national action in this arena.
- Australian Human Rights Commission 2008: *Effectively Preventing and Responding To Sexual Harassment: A Code Of Practice for Employers*, which sets out best practice standards for designing and implementing sexual harassment policies to meet legal obligations under the Commonwealth's *Sex Discrimination Act* (1984).
- Walker, L: 2016 Victoria University *Respect and Responsibility, Preventing Violence Against Women - Ten Point Plan*, which articulates the University commitment to the primary prevention of violence against women, focussing on implementation of best practice in addressing the key drivers of this violence.
- Universities Australia 2017: *10-Point Action Plan: An initial response from Australia's Universities to the National Student Survey on Sexual Assault And Sexual Harassment*.
- Walker, L for Our Watch and Family Safety Victoria 2017: *Preventing Family Violence and All Forms of Violence Against Women Capability Framework*, which identified the knowledge and skill capability requirements of prevention practitioners and contributors working across settings and sectors.
- Walker, L: for the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria & Family Safety Victoria, 2017: *Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework*, which identified the knowledge and skill requirements of the specialist workforce and workforces which intersect with family violence.
- Australian Human Rights Commission 2017: *"Change the Course: National Report into Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities*, which made recommendations on work that needed to be undertaken to strengthen University activity in both responding to and preventing sexual violence.
- Broderick E 2017: *Effectively Responding to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault at the James Cook University*, which built on work undertaken by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) and international best practice standards to produce 1) an evidence-informed framework which can be used to assess University policies and procedures when responding to sexual violence and 2) a comparison of the policies of five Australian Universities, according to the framework developed.
- Our Watch, 2016 & 2020: *Change the Story: The National framework underpinning action to prevent violence against women*. This framework underpins activity currently being undertaken by the Australian and state governments and cross sector organisations.
- Carman M et al 2020: *Pride in Prevention: A Guide to Primary Prevention of Family Violence Experienced by LGBTIQ Communities*, Rainbow Health Victoria.

- Rosenthal I & Banks R 2018: *An Initial Review of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response at the University of Tasmania*, which used the framework articulated by Broderick E 2017 to review UTAS sexual violence policies and procedures in 2018.
- Universities Australia, Our Watch & Victorian Government (2021): *Educating for Equality. A Model to Address Gender-based Violence at, and Through Australian Universities*.
- Walker, L 2022: *Australia National University: Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy Assessors Report* designed to strengthen development of a “whole of University approach” in preventing sexual violence on campus.
- Victoria University, 2022: *Second Respect and Responsibility Action Plan*.
- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Workforce Innovation & Development Unit 2023: *Family Violence Workforce Project*, which includes identification of the core functions performed by varying segments of the specialist family violence workforce, position descriptions and recommended classification levels.
- Australian Government Department of Social Services 2023: *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022- 2032* which indicates the shared vision of Australian governments to end gender-based violence in one generation. It provides a blueprint for the next ten years, setting out the work needing to be undertaken by all governments and all sectors across the country – including those located within the higher education setting.
- Australian Government Department of Education 2023: *Draft Action Plan Addressing Gender - Based Violence in Higher Education*, which foreshadows increased focus on activity taking place across Australian Universities which advances sector work in both responding to and preventing gender-based violence.
- Australian Government Department of Education 2024: *Action Plan Addressing Gender- Based Violence in Higher Education*, which provides high level insight into government expectations of Universities in their work in both responding to, and preventing gender-based violence.

1.2 Consultation sessions with students and staff

To gain insight into UTAS activity and progress in addressing GBV, eighteen consultation sessions were conducted with staff and students located across UTAS. In instances where clarification on specific issues was required, further liaison took place with interview participants or staff engaged in management of the project.

1.3 Review of UTAS documentation

A range of UTAS documentation was reviewed, including:

- 2018: Statement of Commitment and Outline of Response to *Change the Course* Recommendations.
- 2019: Independent Oversight Committee Report On Progress Towards Implementation Of Recommendations from *Change the Course*.
- 2020: The Maree Norton Review
- 2022: Report on implementation of recommendations from *Change the Course*,
- 2023: Data from the *Change the Course* survey
- Current Student Behaviour and Conduct Ordinance

- Current Behaviour Policy
- Current Behaviour Procedure
- Current Students Complaints Procedure
- Current Professional Experience Placement Procedure
- College of Health Science Professional Placement Guidelines
- A review of residential accommodation conducted by the NOUS group
- Executive team briefing note: *Future State of the Safe and Fair Community Unit*
- Current UTAS Web site information pertaining to:
 - The *Respect. Now. Always* campaign.
 - The Safe and Fair Community Unit
 - Support services available to students and staff.

1.4 External liaison

To inform the review, liaison took place with the following external experts and stakeholders:

- Ministerial advisors and senior staff working on development of the aforementioned Australian Government Action Plan (the *Action Plan 2024*) to ensure alignment with future work being undertaken by UTAS and government.
- Our Watch CEO and staff working to prevent GBV taking place across the higher education setting.
- The chief investigator responsible for the design, implementation, analysis and documentation of the *National Community Attitudes Survey on Violence Against Women*.
- Senior staff from Victoria University who are identified as leaders in addressing sexual violence in the University context.

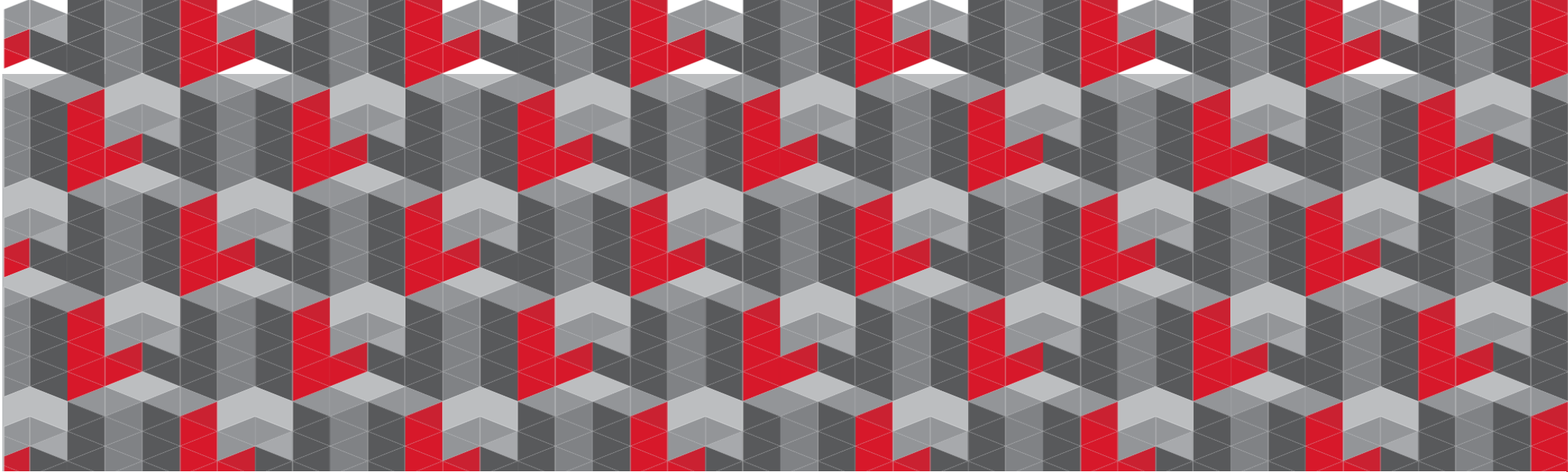
1.5 A review framework aligned with the Rosenthal and Banks review of UTAS activity in 2018

Informed by the above resources and in particular work undertaken by Broderick in 2017, and later by Rosenthal and Banks in 2018, a framework was developed to support the current UTAS review. This framework incorporates focus on three inter-related domains which include:

- The foundations required to support a **Whole of University approach** to addressing GBV.
- Best practice policies and procedures to underpin a Whole of University approach in **Responding to GBV**.
- Best practice underpinning a Whole of University approach to **Preventing GBV**.

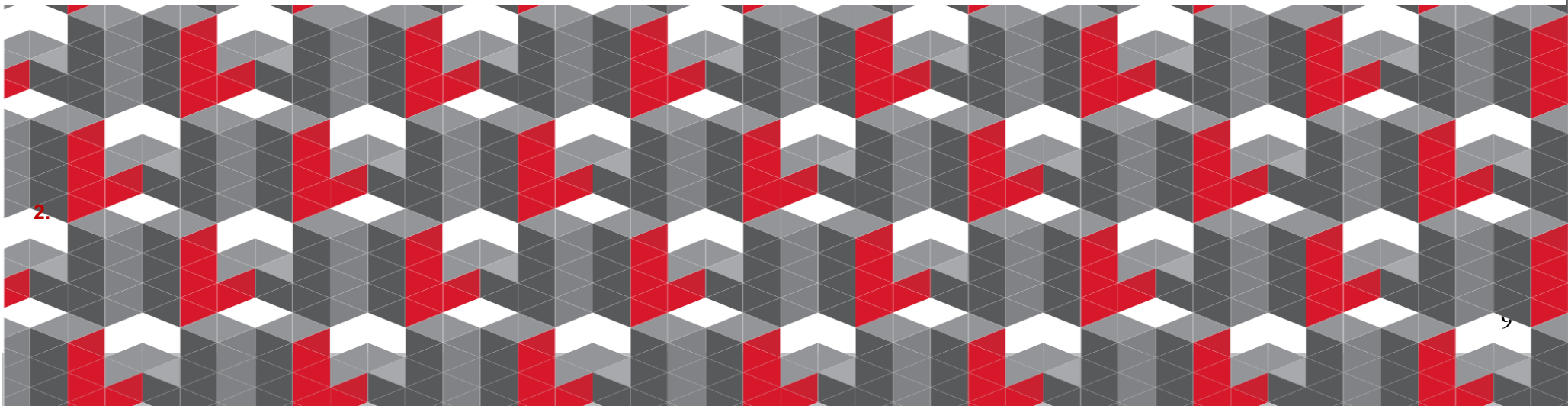
1.6 Provision of expert advice

Whilst not an aspect of the review, UTAS was also provided with advice on development of its response to the consultation process surrounding the Australian Government draft action plan.



SECTION TWO: ACHIEVING BEST PRACTICE IN ADDRESSING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

REQUIRED OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES, REVIEWER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Staff participating in the consultation process clearly have extensive knowledge and skills in their areas of expertise, and are highly motivated and committed to further progression of work in addressing gender-based violence. The Vice-Chancellor, members of the senior executive team and all staff and students interviewed were unanimous in the belief that UTAS should place work in addressing gender-based violence as a central priority for action, and strive to attain best practice in this arena.

Data obtained from the national *Change the Course* survey indicates that UTAS currently sits in the mid-range of Universities experiencing and addressing gender-based violence across Australia. Whilst some Universities report lower prevalence rates and are performing well, others are falling well below the national average.

Whilst UTAS has undertaken significant work across the University in improving responses to those subjected to GBV, this work understandably became fragmented with lost momentum during the COVID pandemic. In the prevention of GBV domain, UTAS work appears embryonic.

The tables presented in this section outline the overall findings of the review and ensuing recommendations which are organised around three objectives which include:

- Building the foundational elements required to underpin a whole-of-University, best practice approach in both responding to and preventing GBV.
- Implementing policies and procedure to support a whole of University, best practice approach in responding to GBV.
- Implementing best practice initiatives underpinning a whole-of-University approach to GBV.

As student education and training and staff development are across the Objectives, content dealing with these issues is included in all tables.

2.1 Objective One: Building the foundations required to underpin a whole of University, best practice approach in both responding to and preventing gender- based violence.

| 1.Commitment and Strategy | | |
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| Outputs & Outcomes | Review Comments on UTAS progress | Recommended Actions |
| <p><i>All higher education providers will embed a whole-of-organisation approach to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in their organisations, led by their most senior executives and governance boards (Australian Government Department of Education 2024). A whole of University approach is reliant on the presence of strong governance and coordination mechanisms which ensure that required work takes place in a planned and consistent way and that work taking place across the organisation is strong in its quantum, with each component adding value to the other.</i></p> | | |
| <p>The University Council, the Vice Chancellor and Executive team have a visible commitment to addressing GBV.</p> | <p>Reference to zero tolerance is included in the <i>UTAS Statement of Commitment and Outline of Response</i> 2018. The chair of The Independent Oversight Committee 2019 makes reference to a zero tolerance approach and the UTAS website reiterates this approach.</p> <p>Despite these references, a number of consultation participants were unclear about the University position on this issue and whether it was viewed as a priority for action by the University Council and Executive Team.</p> | <p>1. Reference to addressing GBV be included in the UTAS strategy refresh currently underway.</p> <p>2. A formal statement from the Vice Chancellor indicating a zero tolerance approach to GBV is included in all relevant documentation and the UTAS website.</p> |
| <p>There is a shared vision and objectives for GBV response and prevention activity taking place across UTAS, which is</p> | <p>The UTAS Statement of Commitment and Outline of Response: 2018 indicates actions that will be undertaken to both respond to, and prevent sexual violence. However, there is no clear statement in a stand-alone document that outlines the UTAS understanding of GBV, a commitment to zero tolerance, and a vision for and focus of the work.</p> <p>Some consultation participants indicated that there was “a flurry of activity” resulting from release of <i>Change the Course</i> data and the 2018 review. There is</p> | <p>3. A “snapshot review” of UTAS work in addressing intimate partner / relationship / dating violence is undertaken with future directions for this work included in any forthcoming strategy. Areas covered in the review are likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Violence leave entitlements • safety planning |

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| <p>articulated in a high level strategic plan.</p> | <p>also evidence of the UTAS Council being briefed on progress in this domain however, due to COVID and other factors momentum appears to have halted.</p> <p>A focus on sexual assault and sexual harassment is inherent in the work of UTAS; however, a focus on intimate partner / relationship / dating violence as one of the most prevalent forms of GBV, is also required.</p> <p>A high level GBV strategic plan is required, which would optimally include reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the UTAS zero tolerance approach • the nature, dynamics, prevalence of GBV and the role of UTAS in both responding to and preventing this violence • UTAS shared vision and objectives of work to be undertaken • a focus on both responding to and preventing sexual assault, sexual harassment and Intimate partner / relationship / dating violence perpetrated against UTAS staff and students • a focus on promoting gender equity and addressing the drivers of GBV • other forms of discrimination which impact on specific segments of the population which compound their experience of GBV • governance, coordination and monitoring systems to be put in place • anticipated outputs and outcomes of the work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referral protocols with local specialist services • police liaison processes when intervention orders are in place. <p>4. A high level GBV strategy 2024-2029 is developed and reviewed in 2028 with modification being made to support production of the 2nd UTAS GBV strategy in 2029.</p> |
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2. Links with UTAS activity in promoting gender equity

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| <p>Stronger links between UTAS work in promoting gender equity & addressing GBV are forged through governance, coordination and operational mechanisms.</p> <p>Synergies between UTAS work in promoting gender equity and addressing GBV are made visible in relevant UTAS plans.</p> | <p>The Inclusion, Diversity and Equity working group oversees activity in promoting equity across UTAS with gender equity included in this remit. A range of UTAS policies and procedures includes focus on gender equity, and initiatives such as the development of breast feeding facilities have been put in place. Articles on gender equity and material promoting women in research are also featured on the UTAS Equity website page.</p> <p>UTAS reports to the Workplace Gender Equity Agency on progress in addressing workplace gender inequality and has identified reducing the gender pay gap as a key priority</p> <p>An application for accreditation under the Athena SWAN program was prepared in 2019 and is currently being further developed during 2024 for submission.</p> <p>Some Universities may believe that by promoting gender equity, the prevention of GBV will ensue. Whilst work in the promotion of gender equity and the prevention of GBV may add value to each other and some overlap may occur, these activities also differ. Thus, clearly articulated plans in both arenas are warranted, with governance and coordinating arrangements put in place to</p> | <p>5. A review of UTAS work in promoting gender equity is undertaken in accordance with legislative, policy and procedural requirements articulated in the <i>Action Plan 2024</i>.</p> <p>6. A gender equity plan is developed which acknowledges the links between gender inequality and GBV.</p> <p>7. Relevant UTAS activity in promoting gender equity is made visible in the UTAS GBV Strategy and vice versa.</p> <p>8. Stronger links between UTAS work in GE & GBV are forged through governance, coordination and operational mechanisms.</p> |
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| | maximise the totality of the work through the identification of where synergies exist. | |
| 3. Governance and Coordination (See sample Governance and Coordination structure presented in Appendix 1) | | |
| Strong governance structures are in place to support UTAS work in both responding to, and preventing GBV. | <p>A leadership group was convened in 2018 which endorsed an action plan addressing recommendations arising from the <i>Change the Course</i> survey and the 2018 review of UTAS work. Since that time governance structures have changed; however, there is indication of a Safe and Fair Community Unit governance group, which meets quarterly and consists of a number of senior staff. This group is documented as reporting to the Provost (a position which no longer exists). It would also appear that the dominant focus of this group is on complaints / investigations. This is also reflected in the group membership.</p> <p>There is currently no governance structure in place to support and oversee work in preventing GBV.</p> | 9. A sub-committee of Council be convened to ensure UTAS obligations under the new reforms are met, best practice standards in adoption of a whole of UTAS approach are progressively moved forward and successful implementation of the GBV strategy is secured. |
| Appropriate coordinating mechanisms are in place to support both response and prevention activity taking place across UTAS. | <p>Some coordinating mechanisms have been introduced to support response activity; however, varying views exist about the functionality of these systems. Some consultation participants identified the Safe and Fair Community Unit as fulfilling some coordination functions, however, these largely related to investigation processes.</p> <p>There is no focus on coordination of prevention activity.</p> | <p>10. A high level GBV coordination group be convened to develop, implement, monitor and publicly report annually on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • response activity • prevention action plans which reflect a whole of UTAS approach and are in synergy with the forthcoming Higher Education Code underpinning sector activity in addressing GBV. |
| Responding to and preventing GBV operational plans are developed, implemented and reviewed on an annual basis. | Operational plans appear to be developed and reported on; however, they lack a whole of University focus and there is minimal reference to prevention activity. | 11. Informed by the GBV strategy and in keeping with the forthcoming Higher Education Code, the coordinating group is tasked with developing bi-annual operational plans which are accessible to all students and staff, and which are monitored and reported on annually. |
| The contribution of staff engaged in the oversight, coordination and implementation of activity addressing GBV is formalized in position descriptions and workplans. | Apart from some specialist staff specifically employed to address GBV on University campuses, it is rare that the contribution made by other staff to this endeavor is acknowledged and formalized. In order to implement a whole of University approach, the contribution made by staff located across Universities needs to be formalized. | <p>12. The contribution of staff who are members of the whole of University coordinating group is formalized in position descriptions and workplans.</p> <p>13. The contribution made by UTAS staff in implementing GBV operational plans is made visible in their workplans.</p> |

| 4. Knowledgeable and skilled staff and students (NB: Additional workforce development and student training initiatives are referred to in other sections of this report) | | |
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| <p>Staff with the requisite knowledge and skills have led the design, implementation, co-ordination and monitoring of UTAS work in both responding to and preventing GBV.</p> | <p>Staff engaged in the consultation process are clearly experts in their fields, many of whom have knowledge, skills and a commitment to advancing work in the GBV arena. However, staff with specialist knowledge and skills specific to GBV response and prevention activity appear to be absent.</p> <p>To progress activity in both the response and prevention domains, staff with specialist knowledge and skills will be required to support the planning, design, implementation, coordination, monitoring and reporting of activity.</p> | <p>14. A GBV Response Practice Lead and a GBV Prevention Practice Lead are appointed to support design, implementation, coordinating, monitoring and reporting on UTAS activity to address GBV.</p> |
| <p>An overarching staff and student education and training framework has been developed, implemented and evaluated.</p> | <p>UTAS has developed annual mandatory training for all staff; however, it was beyond the scope of this review to assess the effectiveness of this training. Additional education and training designed to raise awareness of issues pertaining to sexual violence and to enable both students and staff to respond effectively to disclosures appears to be delivered on an ad hoc basis. The quality of this training also appears to vary.</p> <p>Whilst a range of education and training initiatives were referred to during interviews, there is no high level overview of the core functions performed by staff or students in responding to or preventing gender-based violence or the associated training required by students or staff to perform these roles.</p> <p>UTAS may wish to consider contracting an external expert to support development of a GBV education and training framework, and implementation plan. Optimally, this framework would be informed via development of a job family taxonomy and identification of core GBV functions undertaken by each job group contained within the taxonomy. Education and training can then be delivered based on the roles and functions staff and students across UTAS are required to perform.</p> | <p>15. An education and training framework is developed and implemented which ensures students and staff from across the University have access to education and training which enables them to respond appropriately to, and prevent gender-based violence <u>within the confines of their varying roles.</u></p> |
| 5. Communications | | |
| <p>Student and staff knowledge and awareness of issues pertaining to GBV and UTAS actions in addressing this issue has increased.</p> | <p>Despite best efforts, staff and students appear to be confused about the information, support and advice pathways available to victim / survivors of GBV, and the investigation procedures and potential outcomes for perpetrators of this violence.</p> <p>Most people interviewed focused on the complaints and investigation as the UTAS response in this arena. However, complaints and associated investigation</p> | <p>16. A whole of UTAS communication strategy is developed to raise student and staff awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the UTAS zero tolerance position • the UTAS GBV stance (see objective 2) which includes the behavioural expectations of both staff and students • activities to take place under the GBV strategy |

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| <p>All UTAS students and staff know who to contact if they have experienced GBV, to gain information, support and advice.</p> | <p>procedures are “the tip of the iceberg” which renders the prevalence of GBV and the number of people requiring a service response less visible.</p> <p>There is limited evidence of a GBV communication strategy to underpin and add value to UTAS work in addressing GBV. A communication strategy is required to ensure both students and staff are aware UTAS’ response and actions.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support pathways for those who are disclosing experiences of GBV • processes for lodgment of formal complaints • the importance of developing and maintaining respectful relationships in both their professional and private lives. |
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6. Monitoring and Evaluation

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| <p>Data from the <i>Change the Course</i> survey is drawn on to understand the prevalence, nature and dynamics of sexual violence and to monitor issues and trends over time.</p> | <p>UTAS participates in the conduct of the survey and monitors trends and emerging issues well.</p> | <p>17. UTAS continues to encourage students to participate in the <i>Change the Course</i> survey and uses the survey as one source of data to plan interventions and monitor progress.</p> |
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| <p>UTAS has a monitoring and evaluation framework and system in place which provides data required to successfully monitor, and report on the outputs and outcomes of activity over time.</p> | <p>UTAS currently provides regular reporting to University Council on the number or reports received regarding sexual harassment and assault.</p> <p>UTAS’ monitoring and evaluation requirements will stem from both the UTAS GVB Strategy 2024-2029 and associated operating plans. Consequently, development of an interim monitoring and evaluation framework and ensuing data collection systems may require development. This interim work could inform Australian Government activity in this arena and be modified to capture monitoring requirements introduced via the Higher Education Code. Under the <i>Action Plan 2024</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities will be required to regularly provide comparable data on disclosures, reports, student/staff awareness of and satisfaction with reporting pathways and processes, and disciplinary processes and outcomes relating to GBV for annual reporting to the Australian Parliament. • To promote data integrity and comparability across the sector, common data definitions will be developed for use by Universities in data collection and reporting. • National student and staff surveys will form a regular part of the agreed response and will be developed by the sector, in collaboration with Government, subject matter experts, student and staff representatives and unions to ensure alignment with other relevant surveys and enable comparisons over time. | <p>18. An interim monitoring and evaluation framework to accompany the UTAS GBV strategy and associated operating plans be developed and implemented.</p> <p>19. UTAS has input to the design of the national data collection system to be introduced under the Higher Education Code to be developed.</p> <p>20. Upon release of the National Code and ensuing identification of data collection requirements, data collection, analysis and reporting systems are adjusted to meet national standards.</p> <p>21. Trends in data are analysed over time with adjustments being made to the GBV strategy 2024-2029 and annual operating plans in order to address emerging issues and challenges.</p> |
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7. Resource Allocation

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| <p>Adequate resources are allocated to plan, design, deliver, coordinate and monitor both response and prevention activity.</p> | <p>Alongside adoption of a whole of organisation approach, resource allocation is often seen as an indicator of a commitment to addressing a particular issue of concern.</p> <p>Resource allocation to support GBV-specific prevention activity appears to be absent whilst activity in responding to GBV is rather undertaken by generalist staff residing largely in SaFCU, the counselling service, residential facilities, People and Wellbeing and communications. However, additional resources are required to support further development of this work.</p> | <p>22. An appropriate level of resourcing is allocated to ensure that UTAS vision, goals and activities articulated in strategic and operational plans can be realized.</p> <p>As a priority for the first year of operation, UTAS consider resource allocation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ two Practice Leads, as referred to in recommendation 14. • Employ an administrative officer to support coordination, monitoring and implementation of the GBV strategy and action plans. • Employ a part time communications officer to support development of communications material which underpin the UTAS GBV Strategy and ensuing initiatives. • Contract an external expert to support development of an education and training framework, and implementation plan. |
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2.2 Objective Two: Implementing policies and procedures to support a whole of University, best practice approach in responding to gender-based violence.

| 1. Responding to disclosures of gender based violence | | |
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| Outputs & Outcomes | Review Comments on UTAS progress | Recommended Actions |
| <p><i>A whole of University approach must first be underpinned by a best-practice, trauma-informed response system to ensure safety and support for students and staff in response to any type of violence. This includes responding to disclosures, reports and reporting processes, ongoing support and safety planning mechanisms, and response training for staff and students. Effective and appropriate response systems are the foundation of primary prevention work – but focusing on response systems alone will not drive the cultural change that is needed. (Australian Government Department of Education Action Plan 2024)</i></p> | | |
| There is a standalone GBV policy and associated procedures which are accessible to, and understood by, the UTAS community. | <p>Whilst significant activity has been undertaken in refining UTAS policies and procedures in the response domain, recommendations arising from the 2018 review were not wholly acted upon. Consequently, whilst there is reference to sexual violence in the current Behavior Policy, there is no standalone policy or associated procedure to guide responses specific to sexual violence or GBV more broadly.</p> <p>A stand-alone GBV policy requires development which emphasizes accountability for alleged perpetrators and support for victim / survivors and refers to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UTAS's zero tolerance approach • role Universities across Australia are expected to play in addressing GBV. • UTAS's whole of University approach • forms of gender based violence prioritized by UTAS which include sexual assault, sexual harassment and intimate partner / relationship / dating violence. • suite of procedures that fall under the policy. <p>The policy should also indicate a UTAS central point of contact to respond to information / support enquiries and contains the contact details of community based specialist sexual assault services and family violence services. Contact details of counsellors or services working with perpetrators to change violent behaviours may also be considered.</p> | <p>23. UTAS GBV policy and procedure framework is developed which addresses both the management of GBV, disclosures and lodging of formal complaints. (See <i>sample framework at appendix 2</i>).</p> <p>24. The UTAS overarching policy reflects a zero tolerance approach, defines the forms of violence under focus, including sexual harassment, sexual assault and intimate partner / relationship / dating violence.</p> |
| | <p>A suite of procedures requires development, which indicates the service pathways and roles of staff when receiving disclosures related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual assault of students, residential students and staff; • Sexual harassment of students, residential students and staff; and • Intimate partner / relationship / dating violence perpetrated against students, residential students and staff. | <p>25. Best practice procedures are in place to guide students and staff responses to disclosures of GBV.</p> |
| There is a central service able to provide immediate access to appropriate intake, | <p>Student disclosures of GBV can take place in any area of UTAS operation. Despite there being procedures in place which provide some insight into the current UTAS response, they are general in nature, not readily accessible and are not used by a number of staff and students. A “one stop shop” for immediate student support, assessment and referral is</p> | <p>26. The UTAS Counselling Service develop an intake system for responding to GBV disclosures from across the UTAS student population.</p> |

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| assessment and referral for those disclosing experiences of GBV. | required. The majority of staff disclosures are currently managed by HR / People and Wellbeing, which appears to be appropriate. | |
| Staff with the requisite knowledge and skills are in place to provide intersectional case management services to victim / survivors of GBV. | <p>Whilst UTAS employs clinical psychologists to respond effectively to the mental health needs and concerns of students experiencing a range of issues, social work is widely viewed as a profession which is best placed to provide the case management, support and advocacy required to respond to GBV. Thus, Universities across Australia have strengthened focus on GBV within both undergraduate and postgraduate social work courses.</p> <p>The National Code to be developed will indicate the requirement of Universities to explicitly consider and address the needs of different student and staff cohorts and the intersectionality of these needs, including LGBTIQ+ people, international staff and students, people from varying ethnic backgrounds, First Nations people, people with disability and higher degree research students</p> | <p>27. UTAS counselling staff engaged in direct service provision to victim / survivors of GBV have the required knowledge and skills to provide intake and case management services which address the needs of students from varying segments of the population including LGBTIQ+ students, international students, students from varying ethnic backgrounds, First Nations students and students with disability.</p> <p>28. In instances where new staff are being recruited to the counselling team, selection criteria indicate a preference for appropriately trained social work applicants.</p> |
| Specialist service delivery provided by external sexual assault or family violence services is available for victim / survivors who chose to receive follow up support after initial contact has been made with UTAS staff. | Wider UTAS staff are not GBV specialists. In some instances, such as recent sexual assault or Intimate partner violence where intervention orders are in place, input from local sexual assault or family violence services will be required. | 29. Working relationships with local sexual assault and family violence services are further developed, with formal liaison and referral pathways established. |
| 2. Responding to formal complaints of gender based violence | | |
| Victim / survivors choosing to lodge formal complaints pertaining to GBV experience an investigation process which is trauma-informed, sensitive to their support and information needs, and | <p>All interview participants indicated the need to separate UTAS complaints investigation work from services providing support to victim / survivors. Many also believed that the high degree of focus on complaints management detracted from more in-depth, whole of University approaches to the issue.</p> <p>As a cornerstone of current National reforms, Universities across Australia will be required to ensure that their complaints management and investigation processes meet best</p> | <p>30. The investigation team in SAFCU is relocated to another area of UTAS operations.</p> <p>31. An expert GBV investigator or a panel of GBV expert investigators are contracted to do GBV investigations for both student and staff complaints.</p> |

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| <p>is conducted in a timely fashion.</p> | <p>practice standards with appropriately skilled and experienced investigators assigned to undertake investigative work.</p> <p>The <i>Action Plan 2024</i> notes that Universities should ensure that all staff, including those in casual or contractual employment arrangements, have the ability to safely lodge complaints of GBV independent of their supervisor or administrative teams.</p> | |
| <p>Alleged perpetrators of GBV experience an investigation process which is informed by principles of natural justice, is sensitive to their information needs, provides options for accessing external support, whilst retaining focus on accountability.</p> | <p>The level of support provided to alleged perpetrators during the complaints process appears to reflect best practice taking place across the University setting.</p> | <p>32. Current investigation processes and procedures are reviewed to ensure alignment with best practice approaches and are amended to ensure alignment with the Australian Government Code, when developed.</p> <p>33. UTAS personnel engaged in the management and investigation of formal complaints of GBV violence have the requisite skills and experience to implement best practice approaches in this arena.</p> |
| <p>3. Monitoring and evaluation of direct service provision</p> | | |
| <p>Monitoring and evaluation data indicates that the majority of staff and students disclosing GBV who access UTAS services receive support which addresses their needs.</p> | <p>In addition to an overall monitoring and evaluation framework discussed under Objective One, it would be optimal to develop a monitoring and evaluation system relevant to services provided to both victim / survivors and alleged perpetrators of GBV. This enables continuous quality improvement and supports development of an effective system to monitor and report on service provision over time.</p> <p>If developed, this work could feed into future activity to be undertaken nationally when developing GBV monitoring and evaluation systems under the forthcoming Australian Government Code.</p> | <p>34. The Counselling service and experienced GBV investigators work with an evaluator to develop a monitoring and evaluation system to capture the outputs and outcomes of their work and inform future service improvements.</p> |

2.3 Objective three: Implementing best practice initiatives underpinning a whole of University approach to preventing gender- based violence.

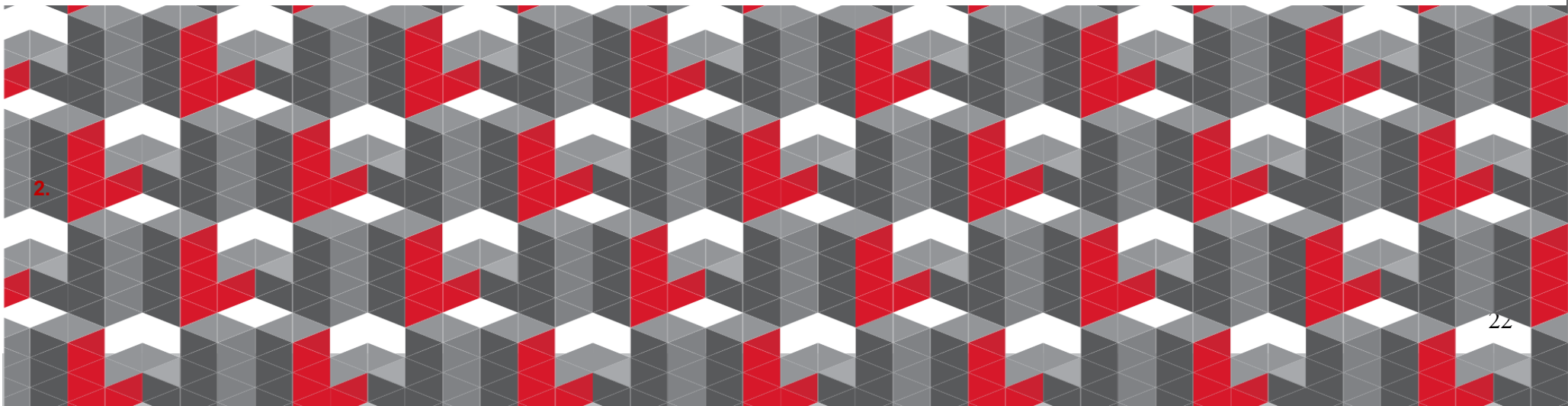
| A whole-of-institution approach to preventing gender-based violence recognises that everyone has a role to play in creating a culture where rigid gender stereotypes are challenged, gender-based discrimination and other forms of discrimination are unacceptable and gender equality is actively promoted and modelled. Evidence shows that taking a whole-of-institution approach is the most effective way to drive lasting change. This approach requires time, resourcing, and ongoing leadership commitment. (Commonwealth Government Department of Education 2024) | | |
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| 1. Adopting an evidence based whole of University approach in addressing the drivers of gender based violence. . | | |
| Outputs & Outcomes | Review Comments on UTAS progress | Recommended Actions |
| <p>UTAS activity is informed by evidence and ensuing government frameworks, policies, plans and codes which direct action on the drivers of GBV.</p> | <p>The forthcoming UTAS GBV strategy and operational plans provide opportunity to design activity in keeping with the evidence base and associated government policies, plans and codes.</p> <p>Staff leading UTAS work require an understanding of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>National Personal Safety Survey</i> • <i>National Sexual Harassment Survey</i> • <i>National VAW Community Attitudes Survey</i> • National evidence base framework articulated in <i>Change the Story</i> which has been endorsed by all states and territories and underpins current government policies and plans, including the <i>Higher Education Action Plan</i> • <i>Action Plan 2024-2034</i> • role and core functions Universities are expected to perform, in both responding to and preventing GBV • whole of institutional approach to addressing GBV • evidence currently informing interventions. | <p>35. The UTAS 2024-2029 GBV strategy indicates synergy with government policies and frameworks, including “<i>Change the Story</i>” which directs attention toward addressing the underlying drivers of GBV.</p> <p>36. A high level professional development program is designed, piloted and evaluated with members of the proposed Council subcommittee and the coordination group to familiarize them with the current national context, research, policy and practice base and contemporary developments taking place in advancing work designed to address GBV.</p> <p>37. Liaison takes place with the Australian government and Our Watch to advise of this initiative, and to assess their interest in developing a partnership approach to support design, piloting and evaluation of the initiative.</p> |
| 2: Engaging men | | |
| Outputs & Outcomes | Review Comments on UTAS progress | Recommended Actions |
| <p>Male staff and students are meaningfully engaged in activity to prevent GBV.</p> | <p>Engagement of men in preventing GBV is a priority for action articulated in all National frameworks, policies and action plans.</p> <p>There is an emerging body of evidence associated with best practice in this domain with some evidence relating to the University setting.</p> | <p>38. The education and training framework to be developed by UTAS includes provision of bystander training to senior staff and a selection of students (preferably men) located across the University.</p> <p>39. Consultation is undertaken with prevention experts regarding promising practices in engaging men, which are</p> |

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| | | being implemented within the higher education sector or which are able to be translated across settings. |
| 3: Engaging students | | |
| Outputs & Outcomes | Review Comments on UTAS progress | Recommended Actions |
| Student leaders are meaningfully engaged in activity to prevent GBV. | <p>Some students, including student leaders, are engaged in activity to address GBV; however, this engagement is ad hoc and not well planned, resourced or coordinated.</p> <p>Opportunities to engage students in activity to address GBV would optimally be identified by the coordinating group and then identified in ensuing operational plans.</p> <p>The focus should be on the development of strategies which meaningfully engage students and which have maximum impact. Initiatives currently implemented by some Universities include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • education and training for student leaders; and • student led development of safe environments for the conduct of forums, events and activities supported by student clubs and associations. | <p>40. Education and training opportunities for students leading activities relevant to student associations, clubs and the staging of forums and events is included in the education and training framework to be developed. The focus of the training is on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing respectful relationships; • responding to disclosures of GBV; • being active bystanders when witnessing inappropriate behaviour; and • the creation of inclusive respectful and safe environments. <p>41. A requirement is included in relevant policies and procedures which indicates that any UTAS student association, club, event or forum seeking UTAS support will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure their elected officials / key organisers participate in the above training; and • develop operational plans which address the creation of inclusive and safe environments, for sign off by the Prevention Practice Lead. <p>42. Resources are provided to support the student body to stage events and forums focusing on the prevention of GBV.</p> |
| 3.5: Supporting development of respectful relationships | | |
| Outputs & Outcomes | Review Comments on UTAS progress | Recommended Actions |
| Respectful relationships are a core tenet of student-facing work. | <p>The <i>Action Plan 2024</i> indicates that particular attention should be given to preventing GBV in the context of staff and student power dynamics including supervision of higher degree research students.</p> <p>The <i>Action Plan 2024</i> indicates that Universities will be required to ensure that physical and online teaching and learning environments, including sites of work-integrated learning and clinical placements, are equitable, accessible, respectful and safe.</p> | <p>43. Policies and procedures governing supervision of higher degree research students are reviewed to ensure they adequately address the staff / student relationship dynamic and make explicit the behaviours that will not be tolerated. Any new procedure should also address all forms of academic staff/student relationships.</p> <p>44. A review of UTAS policies and procedures relevant to the clinical / field / research placement of students is undertaken to ensure relevant external placement sites have appropriate policies and procedures in place to address GBV.</p> |

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| | <p>UTAS adopts policies and procedures focusing on the safety of students undertaking placements in external organisations. Exercising this duty of care is clearly of significant importance, however, the operation of external organisations is beyond the control of UTAS. Having indicated this, a review of existing documentation could be of benefit to ensure that UTAS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) has exercised its duty of care; 2) avoids placement of students and staff in unsafe environments; and 3) exerts its influence in the creation of supportive and safe environments at a wider level. | |
| <p>Student and staff understanding what constitutes a respectful and responsible relationship has increased.</p> | <p>In the future, the <i>Change the Course Survey</i> may be built on to identify trends in relation to attitudes and behaviours underpinning respectful relationships. Likewise, the <i>National Community Attitudes Survey on Violence Against Women</i> may be tailored for implementation across the University sector. Communications targeting attitudinal and ultimately behaviour change are likely to be one of many methods utilised to effect and monitor required change.</p> | <p>45. The communications strategy referred to in recommendation 16 includes development of communications collateral designed to raise staff and student awareness of the unacceptable nature of GBV and the importance of developing respectful and responsible relationships.</p> |
| 3.6: Working with others to expand and grow the work | | |
| Outputs & Outcomes | Review Comments on UTAS progress | Recommended Actions |
| <p>UTAS works with key stakeholders across the government, education and community sectors in order to expand and increases the impacts of activities.</p> | <p>The <i>Action Plan 2024</i> focuses on working collaboratively with government; however, this is only part of the picture. Partnership / collaborative activity will also be required with other Universities, specialist community based agencies mandated to respond to GBV, community based agencies working to promote gender equity to prevent GBV, and the education sector more broadly.</p> <p>Some interview participants were keen to advance work with young people before they entered into the higher education setting. Thus, an education system response is warranted.</p> | <p>46. UTAS strengthens links with specialist community-based agencies working to both respond to and prevent GBV.</p> <p>47. UTAS works with the Tasmanian government, the Australian Government Minister for Education and the Principals Association to assess the feasibility of further systems development which strengthens Respect and Responsibility Programs being designed for use in the secondary education setting.</p> |



CONCLUSION



Over recent years the important role that Universities across Australia can play in addressing GBV has been acknowledged at the international, national and state levels. At the same time, Universities have undergone and will continue to undergo rapid change brought about by the COVID pandemic, an unstable economic environment, the shifting demographic of their student populations and, in many instances, downsizing in staff numbers. Despite this, alongside the juggling of significant demands, a number of Universities across Australia, including UTAS, have remained constant in their commitment to respond effectively to those subjected to and perpetrating GBV whilst also contributing to preventing this violence from occurring in the first place.

Many harmful population-level behaviours have been modified, and in some instances eradicated over time. However, as GBV is embedded in economic, social, political and cultural conditions which result in significant gender power imbalances and has been manifest in every part of the globe for centuries, addressing GBV is not a short-term proposition.

Despite this, the journey of change in Australia has progressed significantly. Addressing GBV is now established as a priority for national, state and local governments across Australia. We have population-level surveys which monitor the prevalence, dynamics and impacts of this violence; have insight into what drives this violence and have secured legislative and procedural reforms which indicate that GBV is unacceptable, and that perpetrators of this violence will be held to account for their actions.

As GBV occurs in all facets of our lives in which we live, work, recreate and are educated, cross-sector organisations including Universities, those from the corporate and not for profit sectors are beginning to rise to the challenge. This has resulted in widespread workplace reforms, improved policing of family violence complaints, changes in how the justice system responds to both victim / survivors of GBV and those who perpetrate it.

Gender-based violence is deeply rooted in gender-based power inequalities, rigid gender norms and gender-based discrimination. To prevent violence against women and LGBTIQ+ people, these drivers must be acknowledged, addressed, and challenged. The higher education sector has a unique opportunity to drive social change at scale with 1.5 million students and over 130,000 staff. Many within the sector are already pursuing this opportunity and supporting students within their communities. Institutions have strong connections to local and international communities and are driven by the pursuit of knowledge, evidence and change through education. Institutions, in partnership with students, staff, their communities and subject matter experts, can and must do more to prevent gender-based violence. (Australian Government Department of Education Draft action Plan 2023)

Documentation reviewed and input provided by consultation participants indicates that work in addressing GBV is taking place across UTAS, with many initiatives having been implemented. However, to move closer toward best practice standards and expectations articulated in the *Action Plan 2024*, additional activity needs to be undertaken and embedded in the operations of the University.

UTAS is in a relatively unique position to effect change, not only across its campuses but also at the state level. As a key provider of higher education in Tasmania, UTAS enrolls a significant number of students each year, employs most academic staff in Tasmania, contracts many service providers and, through its daily operation, has developed strong relationships and partnerships with many cross-sector organisations, and within government. Thus, the influence that UTAS can exert in addressing GBV in Tasmania is far reaching.

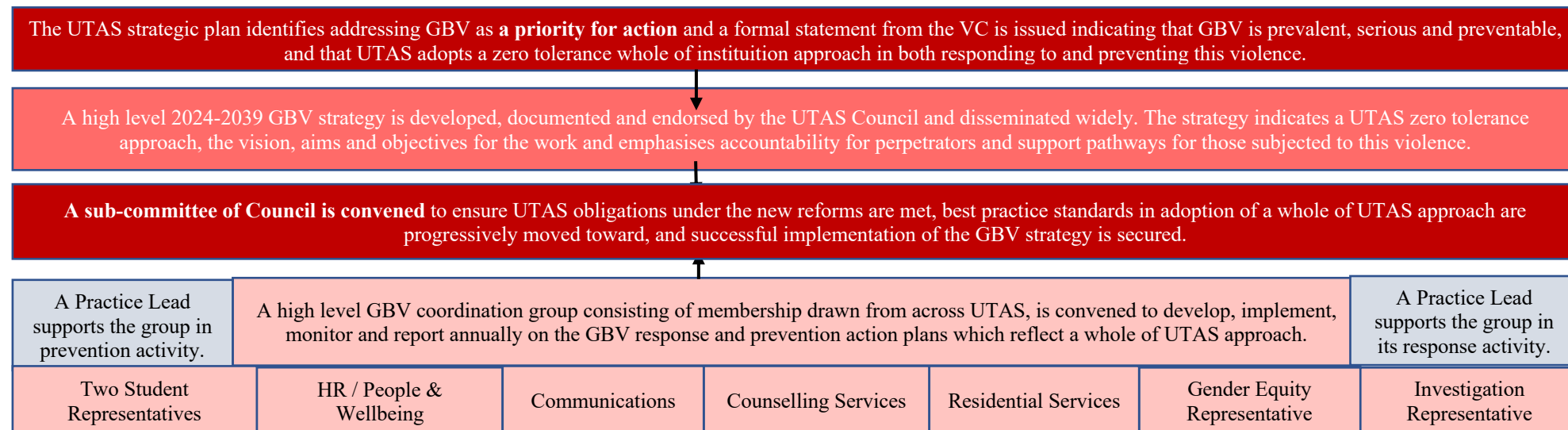
There are forty-seven recommendations made in this report for consideration by UTAS. Whilst the implications of these recommendations may seem daunting, an initial five-year timeframe has been indicated to address these recommendations, in a staggered fashion. The essential aspect of the work in the initial stage will be development of sustainable governance, coordination and operating mechanisms upon which the work can be consolidated.

Further development of policies and procedures to guide responses to GBV, which ensure that the needs of victim / survivors are met and which hold perpetrators to account, are likely to be areas of focus in the short to medium term. This focus, alongside workforce development and student education and training will ensure that appropriate services and service pathways are in place and that disclosures and complaints of GBV by UTAS students and staff and students increase.

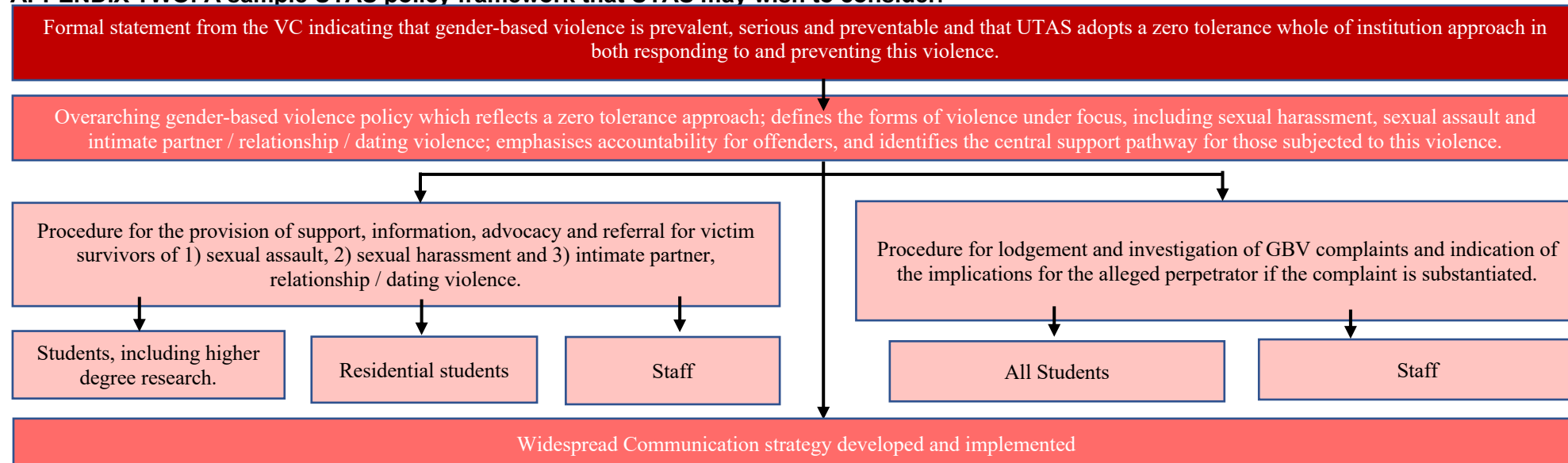
The longer term and perhaps the most important aspect of the work over the next five years will be implementation of a well-targeted and staggered approach to the prevention of GBV which is supported by widespread student and staff engagement, adopts a multi-method approach, is embedded in the culture of the University, and involves men.

At the end of this five-year period, it is envisaged that UTAS will demonstrate improvements across the University in both responding to and preventing GBV through data transparency and scrutiny. It is also envisaged that UTAS will be viewed as an exemplar in achieving best practice in addressing GBV within the higher education setting. We now know that change is possible, the prevention of GBV is possible and that UTAS is well placed to work alongside and lead aspects of this work with others who share the same commitment to this pursuit.

APPENDIX ONE: A sample governance and coordination structure UTAS may wish to consider.



APPENDIX TWO: A sample UTAS policy framework that UTAS may wish to consider.



APPENDIX THREE: Summary of recommendations.

| OBJECTIVE ONE: BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS REQUIRED TO UNDERPIN A WHOLE OF UNIVERSITY, BEST PRACTICE APPROACH IN BOTH RESPONDING TO AND PREVENTING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE | |
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| Outputs & Outcomes | It is recommended that: |
| 1. Commitment and Strategy | |
| The University Council, the Vice Chancellor and Executive team have a visible commitment to addressing GBV. | <p>1. Reference to addressing GBV be included in the UTAS strategy refresh currently underway.</p> <p>2. A formal statement from the Vice Chancellor indicating a zero tolerance approach to GBV is included in all relevant documentation and the UTAS website.</p> |
| There is a shared vision and objectives for GBV response and prevention activity taking place across UTAS, which is articulated in a high level strategic plan. | <p>3. A “snapshot review” of UTAS work in addressing intimate partner / relationship / dating violence is undertaken with future directions for this work included in any forthcoming strategy. Areas covered in the review are likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • family Violence leave entitlements • safety planning • referral protocols with local specialist services • police liaison processes when intervention orders are in place. <p>4. A high level GBV strategy 2024-2029 is developed and reviewed in 2028 with modification being made to support production of the 2nd UTAS GBV strategy in 2029.</p> |
| 2. Links with UTAS activity in promoting gender equity | |
| <p>Stronger links between UTAS work in promoting gender equity & addressing GBV are forged through governance, coordination and operational mechanisms.</p> <p>Synergies between UTAS work in promoting gender equity and addressing GBV are made visible in relevant UTAS plans.</p> | <p>5. A review of UTAS work in promoting gender equity is undertaken in accordance with legislative, policy and procedural requirements articulated in the <i>Action Plan 2024</i>.</p> <p>6. A gender equity plan is developed which acknowledges the links between gender inequality and GBV.</p> <p>7. Relevant UTAS activity in promoting gender equity is made visible in the UTAS GBV Strategy and vice versa.</p> <p>8. Stronger links between UTAS work in GE & GBV are forged through governance, coordination and operational mechanisms.</p> |
| 3. Governance and Coordination (See sample Governance and Coordination structure presented in Appendix 1) | |
| Strong governance structures are in place to support UTAS work in both responding to, and preventing GBV. | 9. A sub-committee of Council be convened to ensure UTAS obligations under the new reforms are met, best practice standards in adoption of a whole of UTAS approach are progressively moved forward and successful implementation of the GBV strategy is secured. |
| Appropriate coordinating mechanisms are in place to support | 10. A high level GBV coordination group be convened to develop, implement, monitor and report annually on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • response activity |

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| both response and prevention activity taking place across UTAS. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> prevention action plans which reflect a whole of UTAS approach and are in synergy with the forthcoming Higher Education Code underpinning sector activity in addressing GBV. |
| Responding to and preventing GBV operational plans are developed, implemented and reviewed on an annual basis. | 11. Informed by the GBV strategy and in keeping with the forthcoming Higher Education Code, the coordinating group is tasked with developing bi-annual operational plans which are accessible to all students and staff, and which are monitored and reported on annually. |
| The contribution of staff engaged in the oversight, coordination and implementation of activity addressing GBV is formalized in position descriptions and workplans. | <p>12. The contribution of staff who are members of the whole of University coordinating group is formalized in position descriptions and workplans.</p> <p>13. The contribution made by UTAS staff in implementing GBV operational plans is made visible in their workplans.</p> |
| 4. Knowledgeable and skilled staff and students. (NB: Additional workforce development and student training initiatives referred to in other sections of this report). | |
| Staff with the requisite knowledge and skills have led the design, implementation, co-ordination and monitoring of UTAS work in both responding to and preventing GBV. | 14. A GBV Response Practice Lead and a GBV Prevention Practice Lead are appointed to support design, implementation, coordinating, monitoring and reporting on UTAS activity to address GBV. |
| An overarching staff and student education and training framework has been developed, implemented and evaluated. | 15. An education and training framework is developed and implemented which ensures students and staff from across the University have access to education and training which enables them to appropriately respond to and prevent gender-based violence <u>within the confines of their varying roles.</u> |
| 5. Communications | |
| <p>Student and staff knowledge and awareness of issues pertaining to GBV and UTAS actions in addressing this issue has increased.</p> <p>All UTAS students and staff know who to contact if they have experienced GBV, to gain information, support and advice.</p> | <p>16. A whole of UTAS communication strategy is developed to raise student and staff awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the UTAS zero tolerance position the UTAS GBV policy (see objective 2) which includes the behavioural expectations of both staff and students activities to take place under the GBV strategy support pathways for those who are disclosing experiences of GBV processes for lodgment of formal complaints the importance of developing and maintaining respectful relationships in both their professional and private lives. |
| 6. Monitoring and Evaluation | |
| Data from the <i>Change the Course</i> survey is drawn on to understand the prevalence, nature and | 17. UTAS continues to encourage students to participate in the <i>Change the Course</i> survey and uses the survey as one source of data to plan interventions and monitor progress. |

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| dynamics of sexual violence and to monitor issues and trends over time. | |
| UTAS has a monitoring and evaluation framework and system in place which provides data required to successfully monitor, and report on the outputs and outcomes of activity over time. | <p>18. An interim monitoring and evaluation framework to accompany the UTAS GBV strategy and associated operating plans be developed and implemented.</p> <p>19. UTAS has input to the design of the national data collection system to be introduced under the Higher Education Code to be developed.</p> <p>20. Upon release of the National Code and ensuing identification of data collection requirements, data collection, analysis and reporting systems are adjusted to meet national standards.</p> <p>21. Trends in data are analysed over time with adjustments being made to the GBV strategy 2024-2029 and annual operating plans in order to address emerging issues and challenges.</p> |
| 7. Resource Allocation | |
| Adequate resources are allocated to plan, design, deliver, coordinate and monitor both response and prevention activity. | <p>22. An appropriate level of resourcing is allocated to ensure that UTAS vision, goals and activities articulated in strategic and operational plans can be realized. As a priority for the first year of operation, UTAS consider resource allocation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ two Practice Leads, as referred to in the recommendation above • Employ an administrative officer to support coordination, monitoring and implementation of the GBV strategy and action plans. • Employ a part time communications officer to support development of communications material which underpin the UTAS GBV Strategy and ensuing initiatives. • Contract an external expert to support development of an education and training framework, and implementation plan. |

| OBJECTIVE TWO: IMPLEMENTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO SUPPORT A WHOLE OF UNIVERSITY, BEST PRACTICE APPROACH IN RESPONDING TO GENDER BASED VIOLENCE. | |
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| Outputs & Outcomes | It is recommended that: |
| 1. Responding to disclosures of gender based violence | |
| There is a standalone GBV policy and associated procedures which are accessible to and understood by the UTAS community. | <p>23. UTAS GBV policy and procedure framework is developed which addresses both the management of GBV) disclosures and lodging of formal complaints. (See <i>sample framework at appendix 2</i>).</p> <p>24. The UTAS overarching policy reflects a zero tolerance approach, defines the forms of violence under focus, including sexual harassment, sexual assault and intimate partner / relationship / dating violence.</p> <p>25. Best practice procedures are developed to guide students and staff responses to disclosures of GBV. (See section 2 re: investigation procedures).</p> |
| There is a central service able to provide immediate access to | 26. The UTAS Counselling Service develop an intake system for responding to GBV disclosures from across the UTAS student population. |

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| appropriate intake, assessment and referral for those disclosing experiences of GBV. | |
| Staff with the requisite knowledge and skills are in place to provide intersectional case management services to victim / survivors of GBV. | <p>27.UTAS counselling staff engaged in direct service provision to victim / survivors of GBV have the required knowledge and skills to provide intake and case management services which address the needs of students from varying segments of the population including LGBTIQ+ students, international students, students from varying ethnic backgrounds, First Nations students and students with disability.</p> <p>28. In instances where new staff are being recruited to the counselling team, priority be given to applicants with a degree in social work.</p> |
| Specialist service delivery provided by external sexual assault or family violence services is available for victim / survivors who chose to receive follow up support after initial contact has been made with UTAS staff. | 29. Working relationships with local sexual assault and family violence services are further developed, with formal liaison and referral pathways established. |
| 2. Responding to formal complaints of gender based violence | |
| Victim / survivors choosing to lodge formal complaints pertaining to GBV, experience an investigation process which is trauma-informed, sensitive to their support and information needs and is conducted in a timely fashion. | <p>30.The investigation team in SAFCU is relocated to another area of UTAS operations.</p> <p>31. An expert GBV investigator or a panel of GBV expert investigators are contracted to do Gender based violence investigations for both student and staff complaints.</p> |
| Alleged perpetrators of GBV experience an investigation process which is informed by principles of natural justice, is sensitive to their information needs, provides options for accessing external support, whilst retaining focus on accountability. | <p>32.Current investigation processes and procedures are reviewed to ensure alignment with best practice approaches and are amended to ensure alignment with the Australian Government Code, when developed.</p> <p>33.UTAS personnel engaged in the management and investigation of formal complaints of GBV violence have the requisite skills and experience to implement best practice approaches in this arena.</p> |
| 3. Monitoring and evaluation of direct service provision | |

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| Monitoring and evaluation data indicates that the majority of staff and students disclosing GBV who access UTAS services receive support which addresses their needs. | 34. The Counselling service and an experienced GBV investigators work with an evaluator to develop a monitoring and evaluation system to capture the outputs and outcomes of their work and inform future service improvements. |
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OBJECTIVE THREE: IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICE INITIATIVES UNDERPINNING A WHOLE OF IUNIVERSITY APPROACH TO PREVENTING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.

| Outputs & Outcomes | It is recommended that: |
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| 1. Adopting an evidence based whole of University approach in addressing the drivers of gender based violence. . | |
| UTAS activity is informed by evidence and ensuing government frameworks, policies, plans and codes which direct action on the drivers of GBV. | <p>35. The UTAS 2024-2029 GBV strategy indicates synergy with government policies and frameworks, including “<i>Change the Story</i>” which directs attention toward addressing the underlying drivers of GBV.</p> <p>36. A high level professional development program is designed, piloted and evaluated with members of the Council subcommittee and the coordination group to familiarize them with the current national context, research, policy and practice base and contemporary developments taking place in advancing work designed to address GBV.</p> <p>37. Liaison takes place with the Australian government and Our Watch to advise of this initiative, and to assess their interest in developing a partnership approach to support design, piloting and evaluation of the initiative.</p> |
| 2: Engaging men | |
| Male staff and students are meaningfully engaged in activity to prevent GBV. | <p>38. The education and training framework to be developed by UTAS includes provision of By-Stander training to senior staff and a selection of students (preferably men) located across the University.</p> <p>39. Consultation is undertaken with prevention experts regarding promising practices in engaging men, which are being implemented within the higher education setting or which are able to be translated across settings.</p> |
| 3: Engaging students | |
| Student leaders, are meaningfully engaged in activity to prevent GBV. | <p>40. Education and training opportunities for students leading activities relevant to student associations, clubs and the staging of forums and events is included in the education and training framework to be developed. The focus of the training is on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing respectful relationships • responding to disclosures of GBV • being active bystanders when witnessing inappropriate behaviour • the creation of inclusive respectful and safe environments. <p>41. A policy is developed which indicates that any UTAS student association, club, event or forum seeking UTAS support will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure their elected officials / key organisers participate in the above training |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop operational plans which address the creation of inclusive and safe environments, for sign off by the Prevention Practice Lead. <p>42.Resources are provided to support the student body to stage events and forums focusing on the prevention of GBV.</p> |
| 3.5: Supporting development of respectful relationships | |
| Respectful relationships are a core tenet of student-facing work. | <p>43. Policies and procedures governing supervision of higher degree research students are reviewed to ensure they adequately address the staff / student relationship dynamic and make explicit the behaviours that will not be tolerated. Any new procedure should also address all forms of academic staff/student relationships.</p> <p>44. A review of UTAS policies and procedures relevant to the clinical/field/research placement of students is undertaken to ensure relevant external placement sites have appropriate policies and procedures in place to address GBV.</p> |
| Student and staff understanding what constitutes a respectful and responsible relationship has increased. | 45. The communications strategy referred to in Section 1, includes development of communications collateral designed to raise staff and student awareness of the unacceptable nature of GBV and the importance of developing respectful and responsible relationships. |
| 3.6: Working with others to expand and grow the work | |
| UTAS works with key stakeholders across the government, education and community sectors in order to expand and increases the impacts of activities. | <p>46.UTAS strengthens links with specialist community based agencies working to both respond to and prevent GBV.</p> <p>47.UTAS works with the Tasmanian government, the Australian Government Minister for Education and the Principals Association to assess the feasibility of further systems development which strengthens Respect and Responsibility Programs being designed for use in the secondary education setting.</p> |