

Gender-Based Violence Action Plan

2025–2026



Content warning:

Discussing gender-based violence can be disruptive and triggering – especially for those directly impacted. We want our students and staff to know that in coming forward to discuss your story, you will be believed and supported.

For additional information and support resources, please [click here](#).

If you would like to disclose an incident or make a complaint, please contact our trauma-informed trained team [here](#).



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A message from the Vice-Chancellor

Gender-based violence has no place in our community. Under this new University of Tasmania Gender-Based Violence Action Plan we continue make our community one of respect and free of violence. If you come forward to talk about your experience, you will be believed and supported.

At the University of Tasmania, we are committed to fostering a community where respect, safety, and inclusion are paramount. Gender-based violence has no place in our university, and we are dedicated to supporting anyone who comes forward to share their experience or express concerns about safety in our university. Under the 2025-2026 University of Tasmania Gender-Based Violence Action Plan, we aim to transform our institutional culture, ensuring a safe environment for all.

Our action plan, informed by expert advice and the Walker Review, takes a whole-of-institution approach to change the norms that perpetuate gender-based violence. Through consultations with students, staff, and external partners, we have developed a two-year plan aligned with the National Action Plan to Address Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education. This plan prioritises trauma-informed practices, strengthens our policies and procedures, and introduces comprehensive support services.

As part of our commitment, we will deliver new prevention programs, make structural improvements to our response systems and collaborate with local community organisations towards meaningful change.

Discussing any form of gender-based violence can have a strong impact on individuals and their community. As such, this plan includes detailed support options.

Professor Rufus Black
Vice-Chancellor



A message from the Tasmanian University Student Association (TUSA)

The Tasmanian University Student Association (TUSA) welcomes the release of the Gender-Based Violence Action Plan (2025–2026) as an essential step toward addressing Gender-Based Violence within our university community. This plan reflects the collective efforts of students, staff, and experts who have worked hard to bring attention to the persistent challenge of gender-based violence. Its recommendations serve as a vital foundation for creating a safer, more inclusive environment for all.

This action plan displays the systemic and ongoing issue of gender-based violence within our wider local communities and our university community, a reality which is both unacceptable and deeply disappointing in that it has been allowed to perniciously continue. It underscores the lack of appropriate tools, resources, and strategies that should already have been in place to prevent harm and support those affected. We express our gratitude for the expertise of those who have provided valuable insights. Most notably, the action plan projects the courage of those who have shared their experiences. We thank them for contributing their lived experience and knowledge from a place of deep and personal trauma. You have laid a foundation for meaningful progress.

TUSA views this plan as a call for immediate action and a broader cultural shift to prioritise safety, inclusion, and equity for all members of the university community. Achieving this requires commitment at every level to implement real, lasting change.

We as TUSA believe that the recommendations within this plan are not optional; they are an urgent and overdue necessity. The action plan represents a critical opportunity to begin fostering a culture of respect, safety, and equity at the University of Tasmania. As representatives of TUSA, we ask every member of the university community—students, staff, and leadership alike—to move beyond words and fully commit to implementing these changes.

TUSA will remain committed to advocating for the resources and transparency required to ensure this action plan's success and will hold the University system to account on this, and will continue to work with students, for students. It is only through genuine commitment and collective efforts that we can honour the experiences of those who have endured harm and create a university where all students are safe, supported and valued.



This foreword has been written collectively by the following student representatives.

Jack Oates Pryor (Student Council President), **Belle Smith** (Student Council General Secretary), **Mark Warrington** (Student Council Equity President), **Vaness Yap** (Equity Committee Women's Officer) and **Ranae Zollner** (Equity Committee Disability Officer).

A strategic approach to reducing gender-based violence

The University of Tasmania Gender-Based Violence Action Plan integrates the Walker Review's recommendations within a strategic framework that prioritises institutional change and targeted interventions. It is informed by Our Watch's Educating for Equality framework, The Norton Review (December 2020) and the recent Walker Review (March 2024). The plan aligns its three strategic pillars—cultural transformation, immediate operational priorities, and foundational support enhancements—with the insights from the Walker Review. It frames actions to ensure resources address critical gaps while fostering systemic cultural reform.

This structured approach allows our University to balance long-term cultural shifts, such as advancing gender equality and engaging men to shape change, with immediate needs like trauma-informed support services, transparent reporting mechanisms and improved safety strategies for student activities where there is a high-risk of sexual harm. Thus, the plan ensures alignment with the National Action Plan for Higher Education and reflects best practices tailored to the University's unique context.

Cultural Transformation

Culture, leadership and gender equality are at the centre of our long-term focus to reduce the prevalence of gender-based violence in our University community. The intent with this pillar is to dramatically change the norms and behaviours from which violence (in all its forms) emerges and proliferates. In particular, it not only looks at our institutional settings, but the significant role universities can play within the local community and the role of men to effectively lead change to further reduce harm.

Infrastructure investment

The recent Walker Review highlighted areas of significant reform and pronounced gaps in practice. This pillar sets the operational prioritisation of actions that both need immediate attention and are proven to effect significant change. As the University shapes a culture of respect, this pillar is designed to allocate resources to immediate need and align with current best practice.

Optimising Foundational Supports

Our Watch's Educating for Equality situates healthy response and support systems as the foundation of any strategic approach. Our third pillar focuses on optimising our support systems to ensure our community knows where to find help when they need it most. Our foundational systems of support will continue developing to meet the expectations of a diverse university community while also providing much needed service metrics to gauge quality and inform recommendations for improvement.

University of Tasmania Gender-Based Violence Executive Oversight Committee



Leading cultural transformation

Prioritising areas of concern

Optimising foundational supports

Achieve greater gender diversity

Students living in residences

Expand the role of case management

Implement best practice prevention, education and engagement programs

Power imbalances within research supervisory relationships

Implement a clinical triage model across our student care services

Introduce significant changes to our policies and procedures

Improvements to our bystander training

Introduce wider independence to some of our investigations

Increase transparency and public reporting of gender-based violence data

Emphasis on harm-minimisation strategies regarding alcohol and drug consumption

Promote better awareness of support options

Improve senior governance and accountability

Improvements to our coordination and governance of activities



Reporting to Council and Audit and Risk Committee

Reporting to the Vice-Chancellor and Academic Senate

Reporting to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic, and Chief People Office

Moving from strategy to action

Introduction

The University of Tasmania is committed to being a place where all members of our community feel safe, included, and respected. This University of Tasmania Gender-Based Violence Action Plan aims to take a whole-of-institution approach to changing the norms and behaviours that enable violence and discrimination. Based on the advice of experts, the plan will empower improved policies, practices and trauma-informed care to reduce occurrences of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Walker Review

In late 2023, an external review was commissioned to audit the University's progress in response to gender-based violence. The Walker Review and subsequent actions were approved by University Council in May of 2024.

It was agreed the University would, through dedicated consultations, establish a two-year action plan to meet the recommendations found in the Walker Review.

Consultations since the release of the Walker Review

Over the course of May-August 2024, the University hosted several consultations with our students and staff across our locations in Tasmania, our Rozelle campus and online.

The consultations helped refine our plan, added new actions and ensured what we will do is contextually relevant. Importantly, our action plan is consistent with the aims of the National Action Plan to Address Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education.

Action Plan Summary

There are 38 actions as part of the plan, which are broken down into seven thematic priorities, aligned with our strategy, with both dedicated outputs and outcomes. Each priority is listed below and is explored further in the following pages:

1. Improvements to our governance and coordination
2. Gender equity and preventing gender-based violence
3. Improvements to our prevention and response to gender-based violence
4. Monitoring and evaluation of direct service provision
5. Best practice and meeting national standards
6. Supporting development of respectful relationships in research
7. Working with others to grow and expand the work

Accountabilities

The University Council and University Executive Team have responsibility for the University's approach and plan, as part of ensuring we place staff and student safety at the centre of our work and life together in community.

Our approach to delivering this plan prioritises consultation with staff and students, utilising trauma-informed practice, and is designed to specifically meet the recommendations in both the Walker Review and the National Action Plan to Address Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education. The National Action Plan identifies the responsibility of higher-education providers in creating safe study, work, social and living environments, and calls for stronger senior leadership and governance on this issue.

Governance

The program of work to develop and deliver the University's action plan is overseen by University Council and University Executive Team (UET). Academic Senate and its subcommittees are engaged and will continue to be specifically consulted throughout this process, alongside regular reporting on student safety and related metrics. The action plan and monitoring reports will be managed within the Executive Oversight Committee, sponsored by UET members, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Equity & Success) manages student safety within a dedicated portfolio and is the lead for implementing the plan.

Timelines

Taking a lead from the Walker Report, the program of work designates action plan deliverables into three categories:

- First six months
- Within the first year
- By December 2026

Senior Executive leads are assigned to each deliverable and will report at regular intervals to the Executive Oversight Committee. The community will be updated every six months through university communications.

Please see ***Appendix A: Table of Activities*** at the end of this document for details of assigned leads and timelines for action.

1. Improvements to our governance and coordination

Cultural transformation

1.1 A high level gender-based violence Executive oversight group be convened to develop, implement, monitor and publicly report annually on our strategy, response and prevention efforts. The coordination group will provide regular updates to the Audit and Risk Committee of Council.

1.2 A high-level professional development program is delivered to members of Council and the coordination group, familiarising them with the current national context, the findings of the Walker Review, relevant research, policy, and contemporary developments in addressing gender-based violence.

1.3 Reference to addressing gender-based violence to be included in the University's strategy refresh.

1.4 A formal statement from the Vice-Chancellor regarding our approach to gender-based violence is included in all relevant documentation and the University website.

1.5 A "snapshot review" of the University's work in addressing intimate partner violence is undertaken with improved support channels for victims.

1.6 The University will produce a second action plan 2027-2028, reflecting the outcomes of this action plan, best practice and independent reviews current at the time.

1.7 A comprehensive policy and procedure

framework is developed which addresses both the management of gender-based violence disclosures and lodging of formal complaints.

1.8 Within this new policy and procedure framework, the University clearly defines the forms of violence under focus, including sexual harassment, sexual assault and intimate partner / relationship / dating violence including practical aspects of these actions (for example, financial abuse).

1.9 Improve governance and safety of students participating in practice placements, fieldwork and other off-campus activities.

1.10 The contribution of staff who are members of the whole of university coordinating group is formally recognised in individual workplans.

1.11 An appropriate level of resourcing is allocated to each action within this plan.

Improvements to our governance and coordination

By improving our overall governance and coordination regarding our response to gender-based violence, the University will deliver the following outputs:

Outputs

Create and publish a new, easy to navigate, Gender-Based Violence Policy and Procedure, linked to the University of Tasmania's Behaviour Policy.

The Student Safety and Wellbeing Team will include new functions to support students who disclose or report incidents of gender-based violence.

A professional development program is created, tested, and assessed, resulting in increased knowledge among Council and Executive Oversight Committee members about the latest national context, research, policies, and practices for addressing gender-based violence.

The Executive Oversight Committee produces an annual public report detailing the progress, implementation, and outcomes of the strategy, response, and prevention efforts, along with regular updates presented to the University Council and the University community.

Our Behaviour Policy and Student Complaints Policy are reviewed and changed in line with requirements for the new National Student Ombudsman.

Policies and procedures are reviewed and changed to better reflect the power imbalances that exist in university relationships with a specific reference to the HDR experience.

As a result of these outputs, we will expect to see the following outcomes:

Outcomes

There is an enduring public commitment from the University of Tasmania to lead and collaborate on long-term social and cultural change to prevent gender-based violence.

There is a demonstrated increase in trust in our university regarding our ability to both respond to and prevent forms of gender-based violence.

Staff, students and the wider community will have a better understanding of who to contact for support and have a better understanding of our processes when deciding to disclose or report incidents of gender-based violence.

The University is more coordinated in our efforts to reduce gender-based violence within the institution, including increased transparency through annual public reports, and enhanced accountability through regular updates to the University Council and the community.

2. Gender equity and preventing gender-based violence

Cultural transformation

2.1 Stronger links between the University's work in gender equity and gender-based violence are forged through governance, coordination and operational mechanisms.

2.2 Relevant University activity in promoting gender equity is made visible in the University's Strategy.

2.3 A review of the University's work in promoting gender equity is undertaken in accordance with legislative, policy and procedural requirements articulated in the National Action Plan 2024.

2.4 A gender equity plan is developed which acknowledges the links between gender inequity and gender-based violence.

Gender equity and preventing gender-based violence

Recognising the links between gender inequity and gender-based violence, the University will move towards greater gender equity by delivering the following outputs:

Outputs
The Inclusivity, Diversity and Equity committee will release a gender equity strategy.
The University will address disparity in allowances, promotions and recruitment processes that disproportionately impact women.
Create a more diverse leadership pipeline through programs outlined in the University's strategic refresh.
The University will make more visible our commitment to research and curriculum objectives that generate and act on new knowledge essential to address gender inequality.
Leave entitlements for HDR students are created for victims of gender-based violence.

As a result of these outputs, we will expect to see the following outcomes:

Outcomes

Higher percentage of leadership roles are held by women and gender-diverse individuals, with emphasis on pay equity.

Progress toward 0% gender pay gap across the institution.

An increase in support options for women, those who are gender-diverse and caregivers.

An increase in study completion rates for women, those who are gender-diverse and caregivers especially in areas such as STEM.

▼ Tamar Wetlands Reserve, Launceston.



3. Improvements to our prevention and response to gender-based violence

Prioritising areas of concern, optimising foundational supports

3.1 A Gender-Based Violence Response Practice Lead is appointed to support design, implementation, coordinating, monitoring and reporting on University activity to address gender-based violence.

3.2 As a priority for the first year of operation, the University will resource allocation to:

- Administration support for coordination, monitoring and implementation of the gender-based violence strategy and action plans.
- Communications support for development of material which underpin action plans and ensuing initiatives.
- External expertise to provide ongoing advice on all actions within this plan.

3.3 An evidence-based, compulsory education and training framework is developed and implemented to ensure that students and staff across the University have access to resources that enable them to respond appropriately to and prevent gender-based violence within their respective roles. The training should emphasise students living in residences (including Jane Franklin Hall), activities that centre around excessive alcohol consumption and recognising the critical role men play in fostering a safer, more inclusive environment for everyone.

3.4 In partnership with The Tasmanian University Student Association, a requirement is included in relevant policies and procedures which indicates that any University of Tasmania student association, club, event, forum, accommodation or service provider seeking University support will be required to:

- ensure their elected officials / key organisers participate in the appropriate training with particular focus on bystander training and harm-minimisation strategies related to excessive drug and alcohol consumption.
- develop operational plans which address the creation of inclusive and safe environments.
- ensure resources are provided to support the student body to stage events and forums focusing on the prevention of gender-based violence.

3.5 A whole of University of Tasmania communication plan is developed as part of this Action Plan to raise student and staff awareness of:

- the University's gender-based violence stance which includes the behavioural expectations of both staff and students
- activities to take place under the Gender-Based Violence Action Plan
- support pathways for those who are disclosing experiences of gender-based violence
- processes for lodgement of formal complaints
- the importance of developing and maintaining respectful relationships in research supervision

3.6 The University's Student Safety and Wellbeing Team develop an intake system for responding to gender-based violence disclosures from across the student population. Additional case managers are appropriately trained in trauma-informed and intersectional support practices.

3.7 The investigation function for incidents that include both students and staff in the Safe and Fair Communities Unit is relocated to another area of the University's operations.

3.8 An expert gender-based violence investigator or a panel of gender-based violence expert investigators is considered to do gender-based violence investigations for both student and staff complaint where relevant (for example staff on student cases).

3.9 Current investigation processes and procedures are reviewed to ensure alignment with best practice approaches and are amended to ensure alignment with the National Code, when developed.

3.10 Working relationships with local sexual assault, family violence services and Jane Franklin Hall (our independent college) are further developed, with formal liaison and referral pathways established.

3.11 University personnel engaged in the management and investigation of formal complaints of gender-based violence have the requisite skills and implement best practice approaches.

3.12 Consultation is undertaken with prevention experts regarding promising practices in engaging men, which are being implemented within the higher education sector or which can be translated across settings.

Improvements to our response and prevention of gender-based violence

By improving our response and prevention mechanisms at the University of Tasmania, the University will deliver the following outputs:

Outputs

A new Consent and Respectful Education and Communication Program is developed with a particular focus on intersectionality, students living in residences, those in clubs and societies and areas of high alcohol and drug consumption. The new program will be developed in collaboration with our student leaders.

New forms of MOUs are developed with local community organisations to help deliver these programs.

Individual Work Plans for support staff make specific links to bystander and first responder programs.

New reporting systems are developed to track who has engaged with consent and education programs.

A new intake model is established with transparent pathways for disclosures and reports of gender-based violence.

New position descriptions are finalised with specific reference to expertise in response and prevention of gender-based violence.

Student leaders are invited on the recruitment panels for any new roles in the Student Safety and Wellbeing Team.

Our Behaviour Policy and Student Complaints Policy are reviewed and changed in line with requirements for the new National Student Ombudsman (also an output in Theme 1).

As a result of these outputs, we will expect to see the following outcomes:

Outcomes

Students are empowered to better understand the legislative, cultural and local dynamics of respectful relationships and the role of consent.

The University has developed unique links with local community providers to assist with prevention and response mechanisms.

Students have a better awareness of the support available to them and what to expect during a disclosure, the reporting process and provision of support.

Students will receive the right support at the right time.

There is a demonstrated increase in trust in our community regarding our ability to both respond to and prevent forms of gender-based violence.

▼ The Nut, Stanley, North West Tasmania.



4. Monitoring and evaluation of direct service provision

Optimising foundational supports

4.1 The Student Safety and Wellbeing Team, TUSA student leaders and experienced gender-based violence 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.

4.2 An interim monitoring and evaluation framework to accompany the University's Gender-Based Violence Action Plan be developed and implemented.

4.3 The University has input into the design of the next National Student Safety Survey and any national data collection system to be introduced under the Higher Education Code to be developed.

4.4 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.

4.5 Trends in data are analysed over time with adjustments being made to the action plans to address emerging issues and challenges. Trend data will be shared with staff, students and our community.

Monitoring and evaluation of our direct service provision

To improve how we monitor and evaluate our direct service provision, the University will deliver the following outputs:

Outputs
A new dashboard is created that highlights service usage, trends and areas of improvement.
A new traffic-light report is established to help monitor the Gender-Based Violence Action Plan and subsequent actions.
Regular meetings with student leaders are held to review the data and to ensure continuous improvement in our service provision.
The Executive Oversight Committee produces an annual public report detailing the progress, implementation, and outcomes of the strategy, response, and prevention efforts, along with regular updates presented to the University Council and the University community.

As a result of these outputs, we will expect to see the following outcomes:

Outcomes

Students, staff and the wider community can see data trends over time.

Students, staff and the wider community can see improvements in service quality based on more transparent data.

Students and staff see a reduction in wait times for those seeking urgent care.

University data is better aligned to national benchmarking and emergent issues.

▼ Hytten Hall student accommodation, Hobart.



5. Best practice and meeting national standards

Cultural transformation

5.1 Our actions are constantly reviewed by the Executive Oversight Committee to ensure compliance with the National Action Plan Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education.

5.2 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.

5.3 The University participates in any future National Student Safety Survey and the results inform future action plans.

Best practice and meeting national standards

By engaging with experts and taking a data first approach, the University will deliver the following outputs:

Outputs

The University will develop a comprehensive communication and engagement plan for the next National Student Safety Survey.

The University will be involved in the development of the National Student Safety Survey.

The University will meet regularly with independent experts to assess our progress and understand new trends.

Every two years, the University will independently review its Gender-Based Violence Action Plan in preparedness for the next action plan.

The Executive Oversight Committee produces an annual public report detailing the progress, implementation, and outcomes of the strategy, response, and prevention efforts, aligned to the National Action Plan.

As a result of these outputs, we will expect to see the following outcomes:

Outcomes

The University sees a significant increase in participation in the next National Student Safety Survey.

The University will meet the expectations within the National Action Plan.

The University data is better aligned to national benchmarking and emergent issues.

Our action plans are informed by independent reviews, experts, government policy and the voices of our community.

▼ Kunanyi / Mount Wellington, Hobart.



6. Greater supports for the development of respectful relationships in research

Prioritising areas of concern

6.1 Policies and procedures governing supervision of higher degree research (HDR) students are reviewed to ensure they adequately address the staff / student relationship dynamic and make explicit the behaviours that will not be tolerated.

6.2 A review of the University's 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 safety.

Greater support for the development of respectful relationships in research

By focusing more on ensuring the safety of our HDR students, the University will deliver the following outputs:

Outputs
A new Consent and Respectful Education and Communication Program for supervisors is developed.
We will develop clearer policy and procedures to ensure HDR student safety.
Disclosure, complaints and referral pathways will include specific support for HDR students.
Requirements for HDR supervisor registration and re-registration, continual professional development, and performance are defined, implemented, and monitored including alignment with the Australian Council of Graduate Research's Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships.
The redesign of our HDR Framework includes development of appropriate governance and monitoring instruments, and training packages, to ensure that HDR internships and other forms of collaborative research are conducted safely.

As a result of these outputs, we will expect to see the following outcomes:

Outcomes

Increases in disclosures and reports from HDR students.

HDR students are empowered to better understand the legislative, cultural and local dynamics of working relationships, the role of consent and where to find support.

University data is better aligned to national benchmarking and emergent issues.

Our action plans are informed by independent reviews, experts, government policy and the voices of our community.

▼ Cape Frederik Henry, Dunally.



7. Work with others to expand and grow the work

Leading cultural transformation

7.1 The University strengthens links with specialist community-based agencies working to both respond to and prevent Gender-based violence with a particular focus on support for indigenous communities.

7.2 The University works with the Tasmanian Government, the Australian Government and the Principals' Association to assess the feasibility of The University collaborates with the Tasmanian Government, the Australian Government, and the Principals' Association to collaborate around responsibility programs in secondary education.

Work with others to expand and grow the work

Through improving our local connections and links to our school community, the University will deliver the following outputs:

Outputs
New forms of MOUs are developed with local community organisations to help deliver prevention programs and campaigns.
New referral pathways are established between the university and local community services.
A community of practice is established with local networks, indigenous communities and schools.

As a result of these outputs, we will expect to see the following outcomes:

Outcomes
Our action plans are developed by independent reviews, experts, government policy and the voices of our community.
Our prevention programs are informed by the work being done in Tasmanian schools through community partners.

Glossary

Bystander intervention: Actions taken by individuals who witness an incident of potential gender-based violence to prevent or intervene.

Community-based agencies:

Organisations that provide support services and resources for individuals affected by gender-based violence in the community. Students and staff, regarding policies or plans.

Consent: An agreement between participants to engage in sexual activity, given freely and voluntarily.

Disclosure: The act of revealing or reporting an experience of gender-based violence to someone in a position to help.

Formal complaint: An official report made to the University regarding an incident of gender-based violence, following prescribed procedures.

Gender-based violence:

Violence directed at someone because of their gender, often rooted in power inequalities and discrimination.

Gender-Based Violence

Response Practice Lead:

A designated individual responsible for coordinating and implementing strategies to address gender-based violence.

Intersectionality: A framework for understanding how various social identities (such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status) intersect and contribute to unique experiences of oppression and discrimination.

Intimate partner violence (IPV):

Abuse or aggression that occurs in a romantic relationship. IPV can manifest as physical, sexual, or psychological harm and can affect anyone, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

National Action Plan: A framework that outlines actions to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in higher education.

Period poverty: A term used to describe the struggle many individuals face in accessing menstrual products due to financial constraints. Period poverty can lead to the inability to manage menstruation safely and with dignity, resulting in negative health and social consequences, including missed school or workdays.

Respectful relationships: Interactions characterised by mutual respect, trust, and support, free from violence and coercion.

Safe and Fair Community Unit (SaFCU):

The unit responsible for addressing safety and wellbeing concerns within the university community.

Sexual harassment: Unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that creates a hostile or intimidating environment. It can include unwanted sexual advances, comments, or any conduct that demeans or humiliates an individual based on their gender.

Trauma-informed care: An approach that recognises the impact of trauma on individuals and aims to provide support that avoids re-traumatisation.

Victim-survivor: An individual who has experienced gender-based violence and may identify as both a victim and a survivor.

Walker Review: An external review commissioned to assess the university's progress in addressing gender-based violence.

Further references

Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education

<https://www.education.gov.au/action-plan-addressing-genderbased-violence-higher-education/resources/action-plan-addressing-genderbased-violence-higher-education>

Review of University of Tasmania Activity in Addressing Gender-Based Violence, Final Report (Lyn Walker)

https://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1709043/University-of-Tasmania-Addressing-Gender-Based-Violence-LynWalker-Review-March-2024.pdf

Support services

University of Tasmania

Safe and Fair Community Unit (SaFCU)

Provides support and resources for individuals experiencing gender-based violence. The unit is dedicated to ensuring a safe environment for all members of the university community.

Contact: **SaFCU Website**

Student Safety and Wellbeing

Offers counselling and mental health support to students, including those affected by gender-based violence. The service provides confidential support and guidance.

Contact: **Student Wellbeing Services**

Tasmania-Wide Services

Women's Safety Services Tasmania

Provides support and accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic violence. Offers crisis support, advocacy, and referral services.

Contact: 1800 811 811 | **WSS Tasmania**

Relationships Australia Tasmania

Offers counselling and support services for individuals and families affected by relationship issues, including domestic violence.

Contact: 1300 364 277 | **Relationships Australia**

Tasmanian Abuse Support Service

Provides support for individuals affected by child abuse, sexual assault, and family violence. Offers counselling and advocacy services.

Contact: 1300 737 732 | **TASS**

Sexual Assault Support Service (SASS)

Provides support for individuals who have experienced sexual assault. Offers confidential counselling, advocacy, and information about options for reporting incidents.

Contact: 1800 697 877 | **SASS Tasmania**

New South Wales Services
NSW Domestic Violence Line

A 24-hour telephone service for individuals experiencing domestic violence. Provides crisis support, information, and referrals.

Contact: 1800 65 64 63 | **NSW Domestic Violence Line**

Family and Community Services (FACS) NSW

Offers support and resources for individuals experiencing family violence, including accommodation and legal assistance.

Contact: 13 21 11 | **FACS NSW**

Domestic Violence Advocacy Service

Offers advocacy and support for individuals experiencing domestic violence, including legal support and assistance with safety planning.

Contact: 1800 737 732 | **DVAS**

National Support Services
1800RESPECT

A national sexual assault, domestic family violence counselling service. Offers support and information for those affected by violence.

Contact: 1800 737 732 | **1800RESPECT**

Lifeline

Provides 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services. Offers emotional support and assistance for individuals in distress.

Contact: 13 11 14 | **Lifeline**

Beyond Blue

Offers mental health support and resources for individuals experiencing anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues related to trauma.

Contact: 1300 22 4636 | **Beyond Blue**

Contact for more information

If you would like to discuss the review or our next steps, please get in touch with Dr James Brann – Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Equity and Success) at pvc.student.equity.success@utas.edu.au

▼ The unique, deciduous Tasmanian fagus leaf.



Appendix A: Table of activities

Action	Lead	Due date	Update	Links to strategy
1. Improvements to our governance and coordination				
1.1 A high level gender-based violence coordination group be convened to develop, implement, monitor and publicly report annually on our strategy, response and prevention efforts. The gender-based violence coordination group will provide regular updates to the Audit and Risk Committee of Council.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic	July 2024	The Executive oversight group is meeting monthly.	
1.2 A high-level professional development program is delivered to members of Council and the coordination group, familiarising them with the current national context, the findings of the Walker Review, relevant research, policy, and contemporary developments in addressing gender-based violence.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic	December 2025		
1.3 Reference to addressing gender-based violence to be included in the University's strategy refresh currently underway.	Vice-Chancellor	December 2024	Safety is embedded in our refreshed strategy.	
1.4 A formal statement from the Vice-Chancellor regarding our approach to gender-based violence is included in all relevant documentation and the University website.	Vice-Chancellor	March 2025	Included in our launch.	
1.5 A "snapshot review" of the University's work in addressing intimate partner violence is undertaken with improved support channels for victims.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	June 2025		

Action	Lead	Due date	Update	Links to strategy
1.6 The University will produce a second action plan 2027-2028, reflecting the outcomes of this action plan, best practice and independent reviews current at the time.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic	December 2025		
1.7 A comprehensive policy and procedure framework is developed which addresses both the management of gender-based violence, disclosures and lodging of formal complaints.	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success	December 2025		
1.8 Within this new policy and procedure framework, the University clearly defines the forms of violence under focus, including sexual harassment, sexual assault and intimate partner / relationship / dating violence including practical aspects of these actions (for example, financial abuse).	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	December 2025		
1.9 Improve governance and safety of students participating in practice placements, fieldwork and other off-campus activities.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic	December 2025		
1.10 The contribution of staff who are members of the whole of university coordinating group is formally recognised in individual work plans.	Chief People Officer	February 2025		
1.11 An appropriate level of resourcing is allocated to each action within this plan.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	Ongoing		

Action	Lead	Due date	Update	Links to strategy
2. Gender equity and preventing gender-based violence				
2.1 Stronger links between University work in gender equity and gender-based violence are forged through governance, coordination and operational mechanisms.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	July 2025		
2.2 Relevant University activity in promoting gender equity is made visible in the University's Strategy.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	December 2025		
2.3 A review of the University's work in promoting gender equity is undertaken in accordance with legislative, policy and procedural requirements articulated in the National Action Plan 2024.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	December 2025		
2.4 A gender equity plan is developed which acknowledges the links between gender inequality and gender-based violence.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	December 2025		
3. Improving our prevention and response to gender-based violence				
3.1 A Gender-Based Violence Response Practice Lead is appointed to support design, implementation, coordinating, monitoring and reporting on University activity to address gender-based violence.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	June 2025		

Action	Lead	Due date	Update	Links to strategy
<p>3.2 As a priority for the first year of operation, the University will resource allocation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration support for coordination, monitoring and implementation of the gender-based violence strategy and action plans. • Communications support for development of material which underpin action plans and ensuing initiatives. • External expertise to provide ongoing advice on all actions within this plan. 	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	June 2025		
<p>3.3 An evidence-based, compulsory education and training framework is developed and implemented to ensure that students and staff across the University have access to resources that enable them to respond appropriately to and prevent gender-based violence within their respective roles. The training should emphasise students living in residences (including Jane Franklin Hall), activities that centre around excessive alcohol consumption and recognising the critical role men play in fostering a safer, more inclusive environment for everyone.</p>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer	December 2025		

Action	Lead	Due date	Update	Links to strategy
<p>3.4 In partnership with The Tasmanian University Student Association, a requirement is included in relevant policies and procedures which indicates that any University of Tasmania student association, club, event, forum, accommodation or service provider seeking University support will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure their elected officials / key organisers participate in the appropriate training with particular focus on bystander training and harm-minimisation strategies related to excessive drug and alcohol consumption. • develop operational plans which address the creation of inclusive and safe environments • ensure resources are provided to support the student body to stage events and forums focusing on the prevention of gender-based violence. 	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success	December 2025		
<p>3.5 A whole of University communication strategy is developed to raise student and staff awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the the University's gender-based violence stance which includes the behavioural expectations of both staff and students • activities to take place under the Gender-Based Violence Action Plan • support pathways for those who are disclosing experiences of gender-based violence • processes for lodgement of formal complaints • the importance of developing and maintaining respectful relationships in research supervision. 	Executive Director, Strategic Communications	July 2025		

Action	Lead	Due date	Update	Links to strategy
<p>3.6 The University's Student Safety and Wellbeing Team develop an intake system for responding to gender-based violence disclosures from across the University of Tasmania's student population. Additional case managers are appropriately trained in trauma-informed and intersectional support practices.</p>	<p>Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success</p>	<p>March 2025</p>		
<p>3.7 The investigation function for incidents that include both students and staff in the Safe and Fair Communities Unit is relocated to another area of the University's operations.</p>	<p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic</p>	<p>June 2025</p>		
<p>3.8 An expert gender-based violence investigator or a panel of expert investigators is considered to do gender-based violence investigations for both student and staff complaint where relevant (for example staff on student cases).</p>	<p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer</p>	<p>June 2025</p>		
<p>3.9 Current investigation processes and procedures are reviewed to ensure alignment with best practice approaches and are amended to ensure alignment with the National Code, when developed.</p>	<p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer</p>	<p>July 2025</p>		
<p>3.10 Working relationships with local sexual assault, family violence services and Jane Franklin Hall (our independent college).</p>	<p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer</p>	<p>December 2025</p>		
<p>3.11 University personnel engaged in the management and investigation of formal complaints of gender-based violence have the requisite skills and implement best practice approaches.</p>	<p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Chief People Officer</p>	<p>December 2024</p>		

Action	Lead	Due date	Update	Links to strategy
<p>3.12 Consultation is undertaken with prevention experts regarding promising practices in engaging men, which are being implemented within the higher education sector or which are able to be translated across settings.</p>	<p>Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success</p>	<p>December 2025</p>		
<p>4. Monitoring and evaluation of direct service provision</p>				
<p>4.1 The Student Safety and Wellbeing Team, TUSA student leaders and experienced gender-based violence 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>	<p>Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success</p>	<p>December 2025</p>		
<p>4.2 An interim monitoring and evaluation framework to accompany the University's Gender-Based Violence Action Plan be developed and implemented.</p>	<p>Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success</p>	<p>December 2025</p>		
<p>4.3 The University of Tasmania has input into the design of the next National Student Safety Survey and any national data collection system to be introduced under the Higher Education Code to be developed.</p>	<p>Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success</p>	<p>From July 2024</p>	<p>The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Student Equity and Success) is part of the National Technical Working Group informing the next National Student Safety Survey.</p>	

Action	Lead	Due date	Update	Links to strategy
4.4 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.	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success	December 2025		
4.5 Trends in data are analysed over time with adjustments being made to the action plans to address emerging issues and challenges. Trend data will be shared with staff, students and our community.	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success	Ongoing		
5. Best practice and meeting national standards				
5.1 Our actions are constantly reviewed by the Executive Oversight Committee to ensure compliance with the National Action Plan Addressing gender-based violence in Higher Education.	Vice-Chancellor	3-5 years		
5.2 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.	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success	December 2025		
5.3 The University participates in any future National Student Safety Survey and the results inform future action plans.	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success	Ongoing		

Action	Lead	Due date	Update	Links to strategy
6. Greater supports for the development of respectful relationships in research				
6.1 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.	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success and Pro Vice-Chancellor Graduate Research	December 2025		
6.2 A review of the University's 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 safety.	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success and Pro Vice-Chancellor Graduate Research	December 2025		
7. Work with others to expand and grow the work				
7.1 The University strengthens links with specialist community-based agencies working to both respond to and prevent gender-based violence within a particular focus on support for indigenous communities.	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Equity and Success	December 2025		
7.2 The University 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.	Executive Director Strategic Communications	December 2025		

▼ Maria Island, off the east coast of Tasmania.

