Vice Chancellor's Taskforce into Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment

FINAL REPORT ON THE TASKFORCE ACTION PLAN
NOVEMBER 2023

Final Report on the Taskforce Action Plan: November 2023

In response to the National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities, Change the Course Report (2017) and the subsequent National Student Safety Survey (2021) the Vice Chancellor established a dedicated Taskforce into Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment.

Consistent with the University's long-held ethos, the Taskforce included students, staff, and alumni to ensure a diversity of voices were listened to and were informing a thematic analysis of the University's governance frameworks, procedures, responses and supports for students, and worked collaboratively to develop an Action Plan to guide improvements over the coming 18 months.

All recommendations of the Taskforce were endorsed and actioned and have now been embedded into the University's governance and core business and are subject to regular review and continuous improvement

Taskforce recommendation	Response	Responsible	Status
Recommendation 1			
Develop and embed a conceptual SASH Framework across the University.	The University's revised approach to responding to gender violence and sexual harm is informed by Universities Australia Sexual Harm Response Guidelines (2023) universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/UA-2023-008-Sexual-Harm-Response-Guidelines-web-v4.pdf Operationalisation including cyclic continuous review and improvement has been embedded in university business and will be monitored and reported on by the Student Transition, Wellbeing and Safety Committee, reporting directly to the University Management Committee.	Office of the Registrar	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Framework and practices are now embedded in the University's core business and will be subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.
Recommendation 2			
Promote and support the University Registrar as the accountable officer who enacts and reports against the University's SASH Framework, manages all forms of behavioural misconduct, oversees student and staff education, and ensures the effectiveness of associated policies and practices.	• The Office of the Registrar's portfolio restructured to provide greater prominence and ongoing oversight of gender violence and sexual harm matters. This allows for closer scrutiny of approach and evaluation of inherent risk and quality assurance. Key actions include: • Establishment of Safer Community Team comprised of Chief Integrity Officer, Director Student Success and Wellbeing and Manager Security, reporting to Registrar – operational from January 2024. • Establishment of Office of Integrity and appointment of Chief Integrity Officer (commenced from January 2023)	Office of the Registrar	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Governance framework, specialist roles and related operations are now embedded in the University's core business and will be subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.

- Establishment of Student Success and Wellbeing portfolio which includes Bond Care Team and Psychological and Medical Services (commenced 2022 and enhanced 2023) with responsibility for (1) working with external expert groups to deliver key messages, training, and educational resources to staff and student populations and (2) providing a tiered and connected support ecosystem to meet the diverse needs of student cohorts.
- Endorsement of stand-alone sexual harm policies are regularly reviewed and updated as required.
- Review and revision of misconduct process to provide clarity of process and rights of all parties during misconduct process.
- Reshaping of Student Transition, Wellbeing and Safety Committee Q4 2023 with clear accountability for continuing to review and iterate approaches in collaboration with student representatives and Faculty student affairs representatives.

Recommendation 3

Revise and communicate Student and Staff Codes of Conduct and associated policies to reinforce expected behaviour and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.	The University has reaffirmed commitment to communicating clear and strong messaging regarding community values, conduct and process for recognising and reporting inappropriate behaviours including gender violence and sexual harm. The communication and messaging campaigns are delivered at key milestone points across the student lifecycle from commencing (orientation and residential induction) and throughout the university journey, nuanced where appropriate to be relevant to discipline, residential communities, sporting clubs and student associations. Targeted communications outlining our approach to safer communities and the obligations/expectations inherent in becoming a 'Bondy' includes: • Safer Community Web Pages reviewed and enhanced for 2024 academic year, further simplifying reporting process and strengthening responsiveness. • Student rights and responsibilities recently updated and new content created for sharing on website identifying Student Charter and expectations around behaviour articulated in the General Misconduct procedures. • Student support policy has been reviewed with new, expanded approach to supporting students developed for roll out in 2024. • Partnerships with relevant key partners reviewed and strengthened for greater impact for 2024. • Active By Stander and First Responders Training and Resource Materials reviewed and improved for delivery 2024 under direction of new Director Student Success and Wellbeing.	Office of the Registrar	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Communication campaigns, resources and appropriate training are now embedded in the University's core business and will be subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.

Recommendation 4			
Review the duty statements and key performance objectives of key staff who have responsibilities within the Safer Community model	The University has undertaken benchmarking across the sector and within other jurisdictions seeking best practice through consultation and literature research. This has resulted in key developments including: • Establishment of Safer Community Team to receive reports and respond to complex matters, gender violence and sexual harm. • Establishment of BondCare as the ongoing support team for students from the initial response. These roles are differentiated from the roles responsible for the management of investigations to ensure appropriate focus on trauma-informed, victim/survivor support provided by BondCare Support Team. • Implementation of Advocate system to strengthen reporting mechanisms and data capture – further review and enhancement to be undertaken as part of commitment to continuous improvement for 2024, including enhancement designed to reflect the appropriate role delineation, maintain privacy of all parties, and streamline points of escalation.	Office of the Registrar	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Governance framework, specialist roles and related operations are now embedded in the University's core business and will be subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.
Recommendation 5			
Task a central unit with risk management, assurance, and integrity services to assure the effectiveness of the SASH Framework. Locate the unit in a portfolio that is independent of the Registrar and operational areas	The Office of Integrity was created in December 2022 with a dotted reporting line to the Vice Chancellor to ensure the management, quality assurance and effectiveness of sexual harm is actively addressed. Commencement of Chief Integrity Officer (CIO) in January 2023 provided for greater levels of quality assurance, and process of review and revision. The Office of Integrity support responses to gender violence and sexual harm through the provision of an independent, confidential, transparent, and fair complaints and/or misconduct system with responsibilities including: • CIO to investigate and/or provide advice on allegations of student misconduct within the jurisdiction of the assigned decision-maker. • As key member of Safer Community Team, CIO actively engages in outreach across university community to assure understandings of and effective management of sexual harm incidences. • Office of Integrity oversees monitoring and reporting, including the transparent, public reporting of university data in relation to sexual harm.	Vice Chancellor	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Governance framework, operations and reporting are now embedded in the University's core business and will be subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.
Recommendation 6			
Implement a multifaceted and continuous education campaign focussed on the expectations for staff and student behaviours and reinforces the consequences of breaches.	The University has collaborated with external subject matter experts to strengthen the approach to education and training including: • Collaborated with UNSW Gendered Violence Research Centre to develop specialised training and implementation support. • Established partnerships with specialist groups including Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence and Our Watch network to support continuous review and revision of practice. • Acquisition of "Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence" learning module now available to all staff on the HR iLearn training community	Office of the Registrar	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Partnerships have been established to inform ongoing development of educational initiatives, resources and training and is now embedded in the University's core business and subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.

Recommendation 6 - *Continuing from previous page*			
	• All Safe and Respectful Communities Modules (1-4), First Responder and By Stander training initiatives subject to review and further enhancements informed by student feedback for Q1 2024.		

Recommendation 7			
Increase the presence and clarity of key information for students.	The University has overhauled structures and systems to create greater visibility and awareness including the introduction of BondCare and actively engaged with students to improve the clarity of the information provided. The Student Transition, Wellbeing and Safety Committee has been reshaped for 2024 to oversee continuous improvement, informed and co-designed with student representative members. The University has enlisted BUSA communication channels to disseminate and support messaging through peer-to-peer channels. Resources have been compiled and housed collectively in learning management system (iLearn) with Bond specific eLearning modules developed: Module 1 - Safe and Respectful Communities (mandatory all) Module 2 – Safe and Respectful Communities Sports and Clubs Module 3 – Safe and Respectful Communities Experiential Learning Module 4 – Safe and Respectful Residential Life	Student Success and Wellbeing Campus Life (Residential Team) Sport (Sport Clubs)	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Steps have been taken to increase visibility of supports and ongoing communications and promotion are embedded in the University's core business and will be subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.

Recommendation 8			
Ensure students are aware of and uphold relevant policies.	The University has ensured promotion of clear messaging and resources across multiple channels to reinforce University commitment to zero tolerance, university values, Safer Community model and resources, and specific gender violence and sexual harm information included in Orientation and Residential Induction. Disciplines identified as managing greater risk including Health and Medicine embed key messaging and workshops into curriculum. Sexual harm policies are promoted through eLearning Module which has been enforced as mandatory completion for all new students since Semester 2, 2022 Distribution of content on where and how to seek support included in handouts to students at key milestone events including onboarding and all student hosted events (e.g.: Club Sign on Day, Wellness Week, International Week, Kindness Week) with information and easy scan access to resources.	Student Success and Wellbeing Faculty leaders	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Steps have been taken to increase visibility of values, zero tolerance ethos and relevant charters and policies. Ongoing communications and promotion are embedded in the University's core business and will be subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.

Recommendation 9			
Improve student accommodation policies and rules, and agreement terms and conditions.	Mandatory eLearning module "Safe and Respectful Res Life" now part of onboarding for all residential students. Residential students must acknowledge completion of modules in terms and conditions of occupancy agreement. Residential Fellows and Senior Residential Fellows undergo training and are equipped with information on crisis management and how to respond and refer in instances of gender violence and sexual harm reporting. Bespoke orientation for residential students is facilitated each semester for incoming students. Critical information about acceptable behaviours and collective responsibility for contributing to a safe and respectful culture and community are reinforced.	Campus Life	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Key messages including requirements are embedded in student communications from pre-arrival and across life cycle and subject to ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement.

Recommendation 10			
Develop a high-level workflow and supporting guidelines for student and staff.	In January 2022 the University implemented BondCare, representing a whole of university approach to ensure the management of student wellbeing and safety matters including disclosures of sexual harm and gender violence. The Bond Care model provides for clear identification of 'swim lanes' designating and delineating responsibilities of staff at each phase of response and mechanisms for escalation and case management. BondCare (Advocate) system supports the reporting, analysis of incidents and quality assurance process to the university, and opportunities for process improvement through consultation with members of the university community. Bond Care Model has been further enhanced by introduction of Safer Community Team and relevant web page information, standard operating procedures, and business processes are subject to annual review to further simplify, streamline the model and improve responsiveness.	Office of the Registrar	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Governance framework, roles and related operations are now embedded in the University's core business and will be subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.

Recommendation 11			
Independently review Bond Care's implementation with a view to ensuring adequate workflows and support across the University.	The University has appointed a new Director Student Success and Wellbeing who will oversee the scheduled review of current model and systems assessing the first 18 months of operationalisation. The formal review will include: • Student feedback • Case review/ QA • University stakeholder input including Faculty. • Community expert input.	Office of the Registrar	Recommendation endorsed. Review scheduled for 2024 as per recommendation (following 18 months).

Recommendation 12			
Acknowledge University culture in institutional reporting	The University established cyclic reporting schedule to the University Audit Risk and Safety Committee from Q 3 2022. Institutional monitoring and reporting have been enhanced by the establishment of Student Transition, Wellbeing and Safety Committee, accountable for de-identified data analysis, reporting and data informed continuous improvement, reporting directly to University Management Team.	Office of the Registrar	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Governance framework, roles and related operations are now embedded in the University's core business and will be subject to ongoing review and continuous improvement.

Recommendation 13			
Secure the campus through managing public access and prioritising personal safety on campus.	The University has internally reviewed its security profile and is involved in ongoing discussions with the Gold Coast City Council (GCCC) surrounding public access to and across campus. Intentional strategies to protect the safety and security of students includes: • 24/7 security presence on campus in addition to comprehensive CCTV network where reporting and emergency outreach are regularly enacted and entrenched into campus culture. • Weir gate access is limited to daytime Mon-Sat • Security Team training in MHFA (Mental Health First Aid) and First responder training and other specific training programs to support student safety and welfare. • Partnership with local QLD Police Service including QPS Sexual Violence Liaison Officer charged with managing all the Gold Coast QPR response. • Introducing University Crisis Line in 2024 to enable 24/7 counselling support.	Campus Life Vice President Operations	Recommendation endorsed and actioned. Embedded in University business including process for cyclic review and continuous improvement.
Recommendation 14			
Provide increased support to the BUSA Management Committee specifically in relation to procedures and associated guidelines.	The University provides support to the leadership of BUSA and their advocacy team. This support has included First Responder training and provision of other specialised training and content at regular intervals. Membership of the Student Transition, Wellbeing and Safety Committee includes four BUSA student representatives to ensure continuous improvement is informed by diverse student perspectives.	Office of the Registrar	Recommendation endorsed and actioned.
Recommendation 15			
Update materials on BUSA website associated with advocacy in relation to SASH.	The BUSA website has been brought within the Bond domain, enabling the University to work in collaboration with BUSA to ensure currency and accuracy of information posted.	Campus Life BUSA	Recommendation endorsed and actioned.

Bond University
Gold Coast Queensland 4229
Australia

Toll free: 1800 074 074
Phone: 07 5595 2222
bond.edu.au/enquire