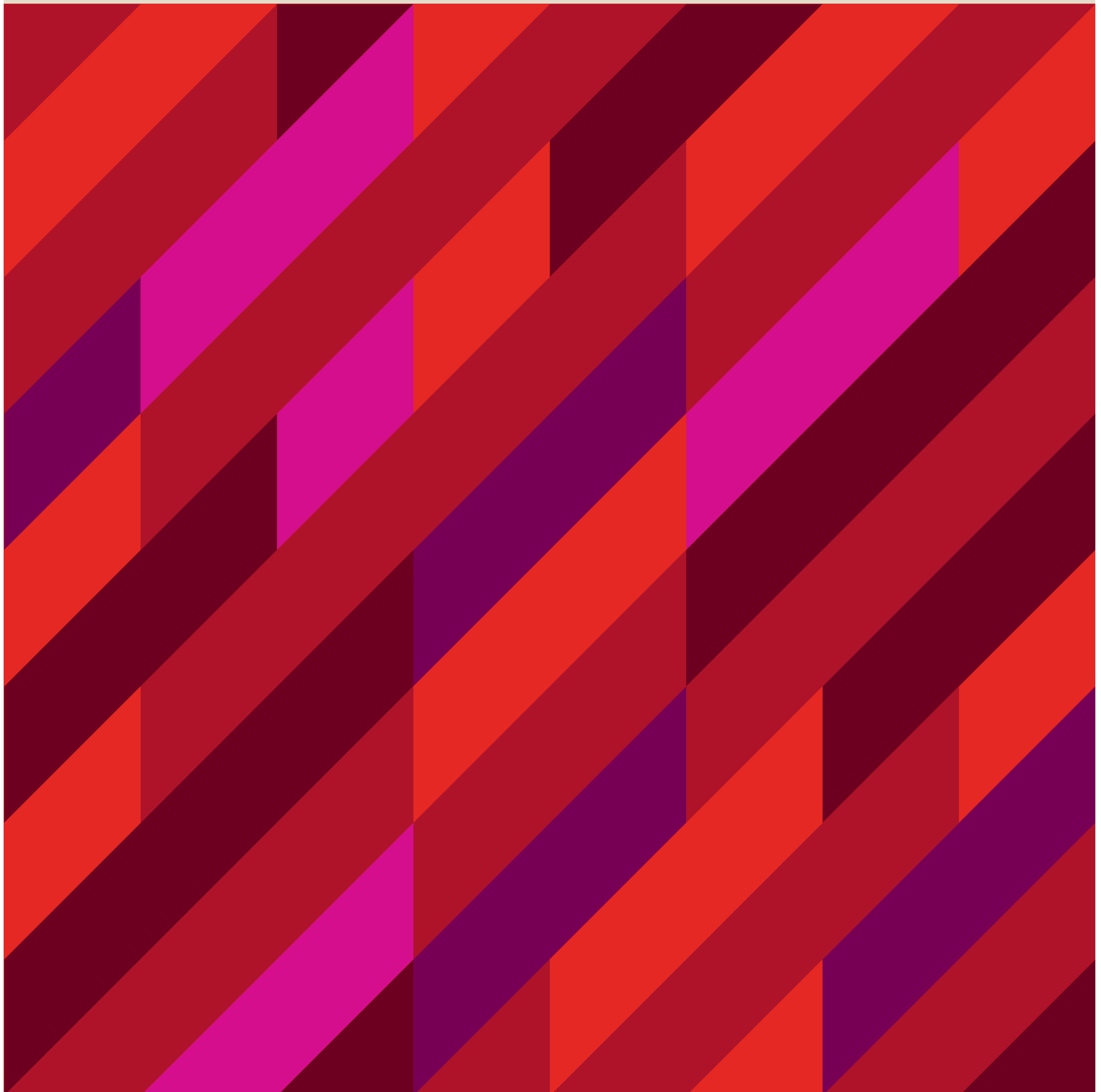# Respect. Now. Always.

ACTION PLAN (2018–20)

Foreword

At this University, there is no greater priority than the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff. In the year since the release of the Australian Human Rights Commission's Report, *Change the Course*, we have partnered with students, university leaders and experts to pursue the commitments we, and other Australian universities, made at that time to ensure our students study and live in a safe and respectful culture, and to ensure that students who experience and report unacceptable behaviour receive the right response of compassion, care and support.

Our process has been collaborative, comprehensive and evidence based.

Moving into the implementation phase of the Respect. Now. Always. Project, this action plan sets out the ways in which we will create the change we need, both to prevent and to respond effectively to any act of sexual assault or sexual harassment experienced by our students and staff.

Work has commenced, and we have already made much progress.

As Project Sponsor, I remain deeply committed to this important project. I acknowledge that there is still much work to be done, and that reform of this nature will take time.

To bring about this change, we are calling on the entire Macquarie University community. Promoting a culture in which any incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment are not tolerated requires all students and staff to support their peers and challenge attitudes and practices that may lead to harmful conduct.

With the leadership of our Executive Sponsors, Nicole Gower and Professor Kevin Jameson, support of the Respect. Now. Always. staff and student advisory groups, and continued engagement with the Macquarie community, I am confident that we will make great progress towards ensuring that the University is a place of safety and respect.

Professor S Bruce Dowton
Vice-Chancellor

Introduction

Acts of sexual assault and sexual harassment can have devastating impacts on victims and survivors, their families, friends and communities. For an educational organisation such as Macquarie, these unlawful behaviours compromise the wellbeing of affected students and staff, and the research, teaching and learning in which they are engaged. Macquarie University does not tolerate acts of sexual assault and sexual harassment, and affirms the right of our community members to be treated with dignity and respect. The Respect. Now. Always. (RNA) Project is part of Macquarie University's commitment to provide a safe environment for students and staff, which enables them to achieve their potential.

In August 2017, the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities (AHRC Report) was released. The AHRC Report emphasises that Australian universities must, in the light of their collective responsibility, act to respond to and reduce the risks to the safety and wellbeing of students and staff.

Submissions made by Macquarie students in the AHRC Report indicated areas of significant concern. Notably, that:

- **13 per cent** of women-identifying students were sexually assaulted in 2015 and/or 2016

- **52 per cent** of students were sexually harassed in 2016

- **57 per cent** of students have very little to no knowledge about where to seek support or assistance within the University regarding sexual assault

- **61 per cent** of students have little to no knowledge of where to go within the University to make a complaint about sexual assault

- **95 per cent** of students did not seek support or assistance from the University following an incident of sexual harassment

  – **68 per cent** of these students did not seek support or assistance in relation to an incident of sexual harassment because they did not think it was serious enough.

One incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment is too many. The findings of the AHRC Report highlight that Macquarie must take action to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment. Furthermore, the findings indicate that Macquarie must improve awareness of how to seek support and report incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

The RNA Project aims to create pathways for support, reporting and complaint-making which are clear and accessible, and ensure that students and staff know these pathways, and have confidence in our commitment to support them.

We recognise that these changes will take time to enact. Meaningful change requires a strategic approach, which may include changes to organisational structures, policies and practices. Most importantly, change of this magnitude requires that we target the cultural factors known to contribute to acts of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

This work is led by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor S Bruce Dowton; two executive sponsors, Professor Kevin Jameson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and Nicole Gower, Director of Human Resources; and the RNA Project team. The RNA Project team works to improve individual and organisational capacity to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment experienced by students and staff.

The RNA Action Plan detailed in the following pages draws on:

- all nine AHRC recommendations

- a broad and extensive consultation process with students, academic and professional staff, and key stakeholders

- further recommendations made by Universities Australia (UA), the Australian Human Rights Centre (AHR Centre), End Rape on Campus (EROC), the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA), and demands from Macquarie's Women's Collective

- national and international examples of best practice.

The plan defines the actions required in seven key areas. In each area, recommendations are informed by sector-wide guidance.

Summary

1. LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Institutional leadership and organisational support is crucial when implementing reform. RNA Project governance is led by the Vice-Chancellor and the RNA Implementation Committee, advised by staff and student consultation groups. These groups will oversee the implementation of the actions outlined in this plan, review progress and drive engagement with the RNA Project by communicating with the Macquarie community.

2. INDIVIDUAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

We all have a role to play in preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment. At Macquarie, we can achieve change as a community by targeting known drivers of sexual violence. For instance, by building the capacity of our staff and students to prevent and respond appropriately to acts of sexual assault and sexual harassment. We will deliver a range of training and awareness-raising initiatives to Macquarie students and staff, based on best practice and evidence.

3. SUPPORT SERVICES

Every student and member of staff who discloses an act of sexual assault or sexual harassment at Macquarie should receive a compassionate and timely response. Improving staff and students' knowledge of internal and external support services is crucial to responding appropriately. We will ensure that online content referring to support is clear and accessible. We will also build on existing relationships with relevant specialist agencies to provide training for staff and work to engage staff with training offered. Finally, we will ensure that the support available is responsive to the distinct needs of different student cohorts.

4. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures play a critical role in fostering a safe and respectful university environment. They articulate the standards of behaviour expected in the Macquarie community. In addition, they must provide clear information about how to access support, how to report complaints, and how complaints will be managed. We will develop a standalone policy for sexual assault and sexual harassment. We will also develop and communicate clear procedures for staff and students on how they can seek support, report an incident or make a complaint at Macquarie.

5. UNIVERSITY COLLEGES AND RESIDENCES

University-affiliated colleges and residential halls must provide a safe and supportive environment for Macquarie students. The AHRC Report, and other reports (Broderick et al. 2017; EROC 2017) identified that the culture and practices in residential settings are an area of significant concern. We will support our accommodation partners to review their culture and practices, to identify if these factors may contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment on campus. We will also assist accommodation partners to deliver tailored workshops and a train-the-trainer program for residential advisers and student leaders. Finally, we will work with accommodation providers to ensure that their policies, procedures and referral pathways align with those of Macquarie.
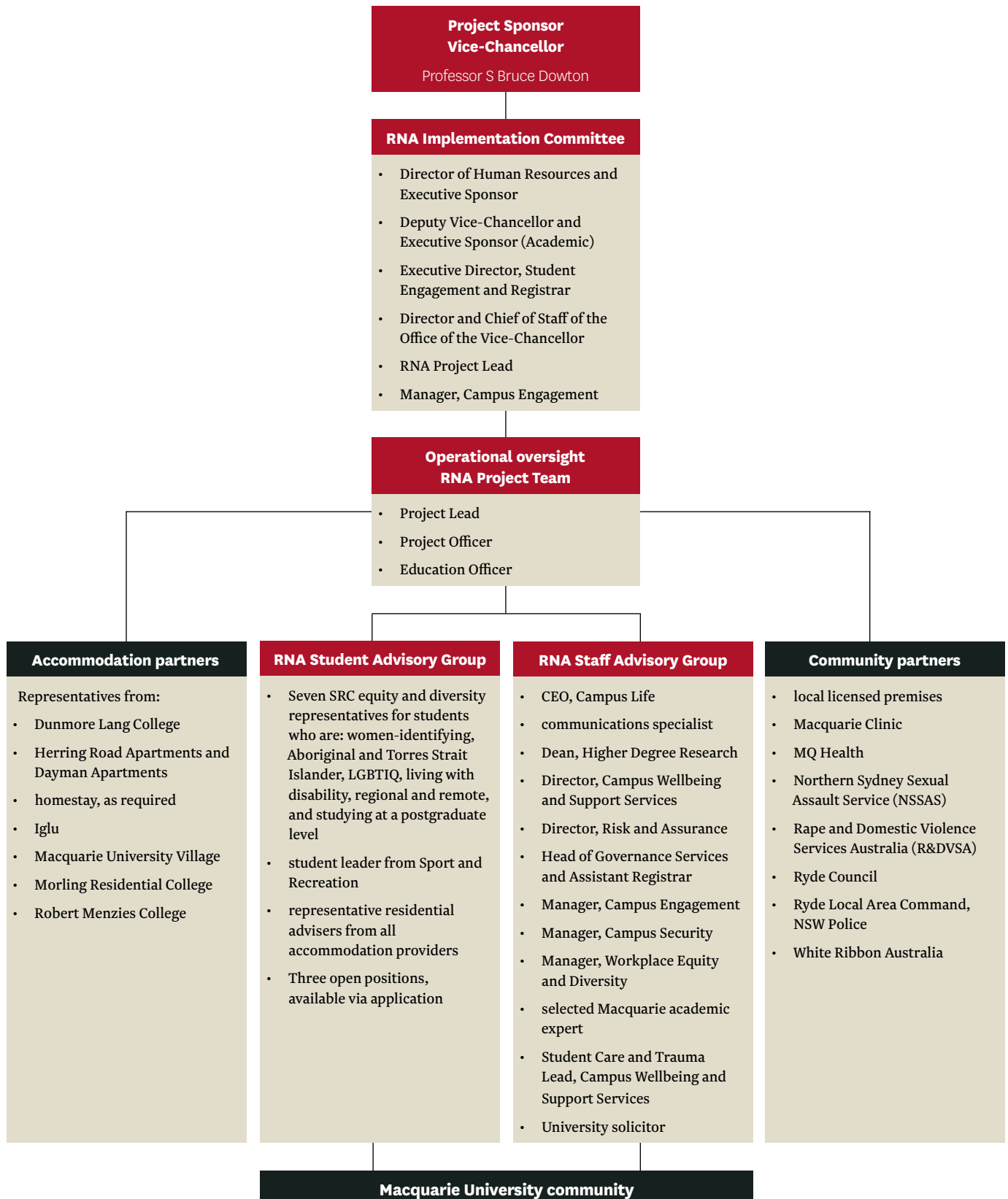
6. COMMUNICATION

We will develop a communications strategy for staff and students which targets attitudes and behaviours related to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Communications will also be used to increase engagement with the RNA Project on campus and improve the understanding of University policies and procedures related to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Any actions to prevent and respond effectively to sexual assault and sexual harassment at Macquarie must be evidence based. Furthermore, these actions should be evaluated to ensure that we are meeting our objectives and community needs. We will develop a longitudinal monitoring and evaluation framework. This will allow us to understand areas of strength, and opportunities for improvement, as part of our long-term commitment to cultural and organisational change.

Key stakeholders

The implementation of this action plan depends on the Macquarie community and key partners. Both must contribute to Macquarie's initiatives for the prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment. An RNA Project governance structure, diagrammed below, oversees the implementation of the plan.

Project Sponsor
Vice-Chancellor

Professor S Bruce Dowton

RNA Implementation Committee

- Director of Human Resources and Executive Sponsor
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Executive Sponsor (Academic)
- Executive Director, Student Engagement and Registrar
- Director and Chief of Staff of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor
- RNA Project Lead
- Manager, Campus Engagement

Operational oversight
RNA Project Team

- Project Lead
- Project Officer
- Education Officer

Accommodation partners

Representatives from:
- Dunmore Lang College
- Herring Road Apartments and Dayman Apartments
- homestay, as required
- Iglu
- Macquarie University Village
- Morling Residential College
- Robert Menzies College

RNA Student Advisory Group

- Seven SRC equity and diversity representatives for students who are: women-identifying, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTIQ, living with disability, regional and remote, and studying at a postgraduate level
- student leader from Sport and Recreation
- representative residential advisers from all accommodation providers
- Three open positions, available via application

RNA Staff Advisory Group

- CEO, Campus Life
- communications specialist
- Dean, Higher Degree Research
- Director, Campus Wellbeing and Support Services
- Director, Risk and Assurance
- Head of Governance Services and Assistant Registrar
- Manager, Campus Engagement
- Manager, Campus Security
- Manager, Workplace Equity and Diversity
- selected Macquarie academic expert
- Student Care and Trauma Lead, Campus Wellbeing and Support Services
- University solicitor

Community partners

- local licensed premises
- Macquarie Clinic
- MQ Health
- Northern Sydney Sexual Assault Service (NSSAS)
- Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia (R&DVSA)
- Ryde Council
- Ryde Local Area Command, NSW Police
- White Ribbon Australia

Macquarie University community

Action table

1. Leadership, governance and accountability
AHRC recommendation: Establish an advisory body to develop an action plan to implement AHRC recommendations

Macquarie's action		Performance measure
Establish an RNA Project governance structure that is led by the Vice-Chancellor	COMPLETED	Appointment of an RNA Implementation Committee, Staff Advisory Group and Student Advisory Group
Establish, maintain and promote collaborative working relationships	ONGOING	RNA team presence at accommodation partner meetings Engage in information-sharing among universities RNA team engagement with MQ professional and academic staff
Senior staff to demonstrate engagement regarding prevention and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment at Macquarie	ONGOING	Attendance at RNA Project meetings and events Active participation in consultation and RNA training opportunities
Require leaders to report annually on their actions	SHORT TERM	Executive Sponsors of RNA reporting annually on their actions and progress of the action plan

2. Individual knowledge and skills
AHRC recommendation: Education and communication for all staff and students

Macquarie's action		Performance measure
Develop an evidence-based learning approach to sexual violence education, which uses a range of delivery methods, available to MQ students. Topics to be covered include: • the definitions and drivers of sexual assault and sexual harassment • respectful and healthy relationships • consent and sexual ethics • empowered bystander intervention • responding compassionately to disclosures • internal and external support services.	ONGOING	Attendance at workshops delivered to MQ students, with embedded evaluation mechanisms to measure effectiveness
Deliver face-to-face workshops for selected student groups with identified needs and risks relating to sexual assault and sexual harassment, such as: • Higher Degree Research candidates • international students • Sport and Recreation student leaders.	ONGOING	Attendance at workshops delivered to targeted MQ students, with embedded evaluation mechanisms to ensure effectiveness
Consent Matters online learning course made available to all students and staff, via an iLearn RNA portal Explore mandating Consent Matters for students	SHORT TERM	Significant proportion of students complete Consent Matters
RNA training developed for all staff via online staff learning platform The online content developed will reflect recommendations from an organisation with specialist expertise in sexual violence prevention and response	SHORT TERM	Significant staff uptake of online RNA training

2. Individual knowledge and skills (continued)
AHRC recommendation: Education and communication for all staff and students

Macquarie's action		Performance measure
Conduct an assessment in consultation with Macquarie Human Resources to identify key staff in student-facing roles and student leaders to receive responding to disclosures and vicarious trauma training. Selected staff in student-facing roles with identified needs and risks related to responding to disclosures and reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment may include: • Campus Wellbeing staff • security officers • staff dealing with administrative procedures such as student complaints, special consideration, and withdrawal without penalty. • UBAR staff	SHORT TERM	Significant uptake by staff of online RNA training Staff with student-facing roles and student leaders receive further training developed by an organisation with expertise in sexual violence prevention
Provide awareness-raising opportunities for staff around responding to disclosures	SHORT TERM	Staff participation and engagement in responding to disclosures awareness education
Establish improved understanding of the needs of the international student cohort in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment	MEDIUM TERM	Standalone project delivered with student assistance that responds to identified needs of the international student cohort
Promote opportunities and incentives for students to participate in research, training and awareness-raising activities	ONGOING	Students engaged as co-facilitators in RNA workshops PACE internship opportunities created within the RNA team each semester RNA Student Advocate Program established RNA workshops credited as part of the GLP Student-led RNA awareness-raising activities held on campus

3. Support services
AHRC recommendation: Audit of university counselling services. Improve awareness of support services.

Macquarie's action		Performance measure
Conduct an independent, expert-led audit of Macquarie counselling services	COMPLETED	Independent, expert-led audit of counselling services completed
Create a student care team to meet the demand of students who require emergency care	COMPLETED	Student Care and Trauma team established
Coordinate specialist training for counselling staff	ONGOING	Specialist training in responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment to be completed by all staff offering counselling and psychological services to students via Campus Wellbeing
Develop relationships with external services to enable referral of students to services where necessary	ONGOING	Developed and maintained links with relevant local agencies, such as R&DVSA, NSSAS and Ryde Police
Improve staff and student knowledge of internal and external support services available relating to sexual assault and sexual harassment	SHORT TERM	Improved knowledge of referral pathways to Campus Wellbeing among staff and students Improved knowledge of referral pathways to external supports among staff and students

STATUS/TIMEFRAME:
SHORT TERM: By commencement of Semester 1, 2019; **MEDIUM TERM:** By commencement of Semester 1, 2020; **LONG TERM:** From Semester 1, 2020 and onwards

4. Policies and procedures
AHRC recommendation: Independent review of policies and pathways in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment

Macquarie's action		Performance measure
Develop effective policy coverage	SHORT TERM	Develop and enact a single sexual assault and sexual harassment policy
Review and improve procedures and pathways, updated in line with UA best practice guidelines	ONGOING	Existing pathways for managing reports and complaints mapped and assessed for effectiveness
		First line of response and reporting channels for HDR candidates strengthened
		Procedures revised and/or developed to respond to reports and complaints of sexual assault and sexual harassment; procedures must safeguard the safety and wellbeing of the individual, must be easily understood, easily accessed, refer to specialist support, and offer flexibility

5. University colleges and residences
AHRC recommendation: Residential colleges and university residences should commission an independent, expert-led review.

Macquarie's action		Performance measure
Promotion of online learning course Consent Matters and RNA workshops in residential settings	ONGOING	Significant uptake in Consent Matters by residents
Assist accommodation partners to develop agreed standards regarding responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment impacting Macquarie student residents	SHORT TERM	Minimum standards regarding accommodation provider responses agreed
		Polices, procedures and pathways from all accommodation partners that align with those of Macquarie
Deliver a train-the-trainer program to residential advisers	SHORT TERM	Train-the-trainer program facilitated to residential advisers
Support accommodation partners to commission an independent, expert-led review of existing systems and culture for the effective prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment	SHORT TERM	Independent, expert-led review of the factors that contribute to sexual assault and sexual harassment in their settings commissioned

6. Communication
AHRC recommendations: Communications for staff and students which target attitudes and behaviours germane to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Provide information about university reporting avenues to staff and students.

Macquarie's action		Performance measure
Increase community awareness of the RNA Project, sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response at Macquarie	ONGOING	RNA communications strategy for staff and students developed
		RNA represented at MQ community events
		Student-illustrated RNA posters developed and distributed
		RNA information presentations facilitated to staff across MQ
		RNA included into HR onboarding processes and student orientation
Increase community awareness of RNA-related policies, procedures and pathways	ONGOING	RNA website content regularly reviewed and updated
		Digital content added to increase visibility of Campus Wellbeing
		Video outlining staff responsibilities and expectations in relation to responding to disclosures developed and widely disseminated
		Sexual assault and sexual harassment policy communicated to the MQ community in a format that is accessible to all staff and students, including: people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people living with disability
		Reporting obligations and decision-making thresholds communicated clearly to the University community

STATUS/TIMEFRAME:
SHORT TERM: By commencement of Semester 1, 2019; **MEDIUM TERM:** By commencement of Semester 1, 2020; **LONG TERM:** From Semester 1, 2020 and onwards

7. Monitoring and evaluation

AHRC recommendations: Evaluate activities to ensure that they have been effective in increasing awareness among staff and students. Collect information about individual disclosures and reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Universities should engage an independent body to conduct the National University Student Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at three-yearly intervals.

Macquarie's action		Performance measure
Design a long-term monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the RNA Project and education workshops	ONGOING	Longitudinal monitoring and evaluation framework embedded
Explore developing a centralised non-complaint-based reporting system, with consideration of issues related to reliability of data, their use and confidentiality	SHORT TERM	Report submitted to the RNA Implementation Committee for review
Commitment to participate in the next National University Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment	LONG TERM	Participation in the next National University Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment

STATUS/TIMEFRAME:
SHORT TERM: By commencement of Semester 1, 2019; **MEDIUM TERM:** By commencement of Semester 1, 2020; **LONG TERM:** From Semester 1, 2020 and onwards

Further reading

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AHRC (2017) 'Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities', Australian Human Rights Commission, August 2017.
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Carmody, M et al. (2009) 'Framing Best Practice: National standards for the primary prevention of sexual assault through education', National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence.
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EROC (2017) 'Connecting the dots: Understanding sexual assault in university communities', End Rape on Campus Australia, January 2017.
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UNSW AHR Centre (2017) 'On Safe Ground: Strengthening Australian university responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment', August 2017.
humanrights.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/inline-files/AHR0002_On_Safe_Ground_Good_Practice_Guide_online.pdf

UNSW AHR Centre (2017) 'Local Perspectives: a case study on responses to sexual violence in a university setting', August 2017.
humanrights.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/inline-files/AHR0001_Local_Perspectives_Case_Study_online.pdf

Where to find support

If you have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment, you do not have to cope on your own. There are many support services which can help you and there is no time limit on seeking help and/or advice.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT

ON CAMPUS
You need immediate help because of a threat. Call Macquarie Campus Security Control Centre on **(02) 9850 9999** and ask for help.

OFF CAMPUS
You need help immediately or a crime is in progress. Contact emergency services (police and ambulance) on **000**.

SUPPORT AT MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

SUPPORT FOR MACQUARIE STUDENTS
If you are a student and would like to discuss support, reporting and complaint-making options, please contact Campus Wellbeing. Campus Wellbeing provides same-day appointments for urgent issues. Fill in the self-referral form online, phone, email, or drop by Reception to contact Campus Wellbeing:

T: (02) 9850 7497
T: 1800 227 367 (24/7)
E: campuswellbeing@mq.edu.au

Online self-referral form:
students.mq.edu.au/support/wellbeing/counselling-services

Campus Wellbeing is located on Level 2, 16 Wally's Walk (C8A).

SUPPORT FOR STAFF
Staff can seek support or further information in a number of ways, including speaking to your immediate supervisor or a Human resources adviser. If you are unsure who your HR representative is, you can find the best contact on the University staff website staff. **staff.mq.edu.au/support/people-management/contact-human-resources**

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)
At any time, staff or their immediate families can access free, confidential counselling or support. Benestar can be reached by calling **1300 360 364** to make an appointment.

For more information, visit the University staff website **staff.mq.edu.au/work/wellbeing/employee-assistance-program**

STUDENT AND STAFF SUPPORT OUTSIDE OF THE UNIVERSITY

NSW RAPE CRISIS LINE
Phone and online counselling 24/7
T: 1800 424 017
nswrapecrisis.com.au

NORTHERN SYDNEY SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICE
Forensic and counselling service for adults
T: (02) 9462 9477

SYDNEY WOMEN'S COUNSELLING SERVICE
Specialist counselling service for women affected by trauma
T: (02) 9718 1955

MENSLINE
Counselling service for men with family and relationship concerns 24/7
T: 1300 789 978

Q LIFE
Counselling and referral service for people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex. Available 3pm – midnight.
T: 1800 184 527

mq.edu.au/respect