



UCA STATEMENT

Change the Course: National report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian Universities

University Colleges Australia welcomes the release of the Australian Human Rights Commission Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment and affirm our commitment and support of Universities Australia *Respect. Now. Always.* campaign.

We are currently undertaking a review of the report and its recommendations and believe that this provides an opportunity for university residential colleges and halls to better respond to the risk of sexual violence and sexual harassment and further develop appropriate prevention strategies.

All university students have the right to enjoy an environment which is safe, secure and free from any and all forms of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

University students, as indeed all university and residential staff, must recognise their obligation to treat one another with respect and should consider the impact of their behaviour and understand that they will be held accountable.

In addition to a zero-tolerance approach on these types of matters, UCA supports its members in further refining and reviewing their policies and practices so that they foster a positive environment, provide the best level of support to survivors, and ensure natural justice opportunities for those who have been accused of inappropriate behaviours.

We acknowledge that over the histories of university residential colleges and halls, students have been let down at times when they have most felt the need for help and apologise for any suffering caused to those survivors of sexual violence.

The report will present us with an opportunity for cultural focus and, where required, reform; working together for stronger and better collegiate communities.

UCA supports collaboration with host universities in sharing the duty of eliminating and minimising the risk of sexual violence. We will also work collaboratively with Universities Australia, and we affirm our commitment to learn and continuously improve and we will carefully consider the challenges and imperatives of the report's findings as part of that evolving process.