
Sexual Harassment Response Procedure

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Procedure is to give effect to the Sexual Harassment Response Policy.

2. Application of Procedure

- 2.1 This Procedure applies to all disclosures and/or complaints of sexual harassment made by Staff Members and Students.

Procedure Content

3. Responding to emergencies

- 3.1 Those concerned for the immediate safety of themselves or others should contact New Zealand Police by calling 111.
- 3.2 Campus Security maintains a 24/7 presence on campus and can be contacted in cases of emergency on 0800 842 8888 from an external phone or 8888 from an internal phone.

4. Difference between Disclosures and Complaints

- 4.1 Mechanisms which the University has in place for handling incidents of sexual harassment include those of Disclosure, Complaint and Alternative Resolution. The differences between Disclosures and Complaints are set out under clause 6 of the Sexual Harassment Response Policy.

5. Making a disclosure of sexual harassment

Disclosures by Students

- 5.1 A student can make a Disclosure to the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team by emailing studentinterest@vuw.ac.nz or calling 04 463 5023 or online at www.wgtn.ac.nz/sexual-harm-students.
- 5.2 Any Member of the University Community (including Staff Members, the VUWSA Student Advocate, Heads of Hall and the Student Support Coordinators in the Halls) may assist a Student to make a Disclosure to the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team.
- 5.3 Students may make Disclosures anonymously by asking a Member of the University Community to make a Disclosure on their behalf; calling from a private number; or through www.wgtn.ac.nz/sexual-harm-students.

Disclosures by Staff Members

- 5.4 A Staff Member can make a Disclosure to an Authorised Staff Disclosure Officer.
- 5.5 Staff Members may make Disclosures anonymously by calling an Authorised Staff Disclosure Officer from a private number; or through www.wgtn.ac.nz/sexual-harm-staff.

Note: A Student or Staff Member who chooses to make a Disclosure may later decide to make a Complaint to the University about the same incident. See clause 7(3) of the Sexual Harassment Response Policy.

Note: The University will not investigate a Disclosure except in certain limited circumstances. See clause 7(3) of the Sexual Harassment Response Policy.

- 5.6 If the University needs to investigate a Disclosure, the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team or an Authorised Staff Disclosure Officer may contact the person who made the Disclosure to ask whether they would be prepared to make a Complaint or to participate in an investigation process.

6. Making a complaint of sexual harassment

Student Complaints

- 6.1 A Student can make a Complaint to the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team by emailing studentinterest@vuw.ac.nz or calling 04 463 5023 or online at www.wgtn.ac.nz/sexual-harm-students.
- 6.2 A Member of the University Community (including Staff Members, the VUWSA Student Advocate, Heads of Hall and the Student Support Coordinators in the Halls) may assist a student in making a Complaint to the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team. Any person may make a Complaint on behalf of a Student, if the Student has given their explicit consent and permission. to the Complaint being made on their behalf.
- 6.3 A Student who has made a Complaint is free to withdraw it at any time. However, if the University has already commenced misconduct proceedings, or taken interim measures, those proceedings may need to be completed.
- 6.4 All Complaints made under this Procedure must be managed in accordance with the Sexual Harassment Response Policy and the Student Conduct Statute.

Staff Member Complaints

- 6.5 A Staff Member who has experienced sexual harassment can make an online Complaint at www.wgtn.ac.nz/sexual-harm-staff. They can also contact an Authorised Staff Disclosure Officer.
- 6.6 Any person may make a Complaint on behalf of a Staff Member, if the Staff Member has given their explicit consent and permission to the Complaint being made on their behalf and this must be made clear when lodging the complaint. There may be limitations in respect of the action that the University is able to take in respect of complaints that have been made on behalf of another individual.
- 6.7 A Staff Member is free to withdraw their Complaint at any time. However, if the University has already commenced disciplinary proceedings, those proceedings may need to be completed.
- 6.8 All reports made under this Procedure should be treated confidentially to the extent possible and must be managed in accordance with the [Sexual Harassment Response Policy](#) and the [Staff Conduct Policy](#).

7. Supporting Members of the University Community

Support for Students

- 7.1 Students who have experienced or have been accused of sexual harassment can seek support from the services set out in the attached Appendices.
- 7.2 Students will be supported during the Complaint process by the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team. Students can also be supported during the process by the VUWSA student advocate or any other support person.

Support for Staff Members

- 7.3 Staff Members who have experienced or have been accused of sexual harassment can seek support from the services set out in the attached Appendices.

How to support Students and Staff Members who have experienced sexual harassment

- 7.4 Members of the University Community can seek advice and assistance from the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team or an Authorised Staff Disclosure Officer on how to support a person who has experienced sexual harassment.
- 7.5 Members of the University Community should:
- (a) refer Members of the University Community who have experienced sexual harassment to the available support services, and
 - (b) advise Students and Staff Members of their right to make a Disclosure or Complaint
- 7.6 Members of the University Community can support a Student or a Staff Member who has experienced sexual harassment by:
- (a) listening without interrupting;
 - (b) being sensitive to their individual circumstances, including supporting the University's values, acting with respect and integrity, and in a way that supports inclusion and diversity, and;
 - (c) letting them express how they feel and respecting the words they use in reference to the incident;
 - (d) acknowledging their distress and that it may be difficult for them to discuss it;
 - (e) letting them know that the incident they are reporting was not their fault;
 - (f) respecting their decisions;
 - (g) letting them know that the University takes sexual harassment seriously;
 - (h) directing them to the available support services and reporting options.

Note: When an individual has experienced sexual harassment, they may express a range of emotional and physical symptoms. The HELP Wellington website provides information in this regard: <https://www.wellingtonhelp.org.nz>

8. Student Complaints

- 8.1 Any complaint made by a student made under this Policy should be made to the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team in the first instance, whether that Complaint is about a Student, Staff Member or other Member of the University Community.

*(i) Student Complaints about Student Conduct**Alternative Resolution Process*

- 8.2 The Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team will be able to assist in discussing different options for the resolution of any Complaint about a student, and they will provide support throughout. Options for alternative resolution of a Complaint are set out in the Student Conduct Statute and the General Misconduct Procedure. This includes the ability to respond with a specialised sexual harassment response that is individually designed to reflect the specific circumstances.

Formal process

- 8.3 Where a Student's Complaint refers to the conduct of another Student, and a formal process is necessary to address the Complaint, the Student Conduct Statute and the General Misconduct Procedure will be followed.

- 8.4 If a Complaint about a Student is referred to a decision-maker for a formal process under the Student Conduct Statute, the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team will update the complainant regularly on the progress of the matter.

(ii) Student Complaints about Staff Member Conduct

- 8.5 Where a Student's Complaint refers to the conduct of a Staff Member, the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team will refer the Complaint to the Deputy Director, Human Resources or a Faculty Human Resources Manager in the first instance.

- 8.6 Following the referral of a Complaint, the Deputy Director, Human Resources or the Faculty Human Resources Manager will take the steps set out in the Guidelines for Resolving Alleged Misconduct. This could potentially include steps under a formal process, an informal/alternative resolution process, or a Tikanga process.

- 8.7 The Deputy Director, Human Resources or a Faculty Human Resources Manager will update the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team regularly on the process that is being taken and with any information to report. The Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team will provide these updates to the complainant.

Note: where the Complaint refers to the conduct of a Student in their role as a Staff Member, the Complaint may be dealt with under the Student Conduct Statute if the Student's employment relationship with the University has ceased, and if the conduct has a sufficient connection with the individual's activities as a Student of the University.

9. Staff Member Complaints

- 9.1 All Complaints by Staff Members should be sent to the Deputy Director, Human Resources or a Faculty Human Resources Manager in the first instance, whether that Complaint relates to a report of Staff or Student conduct.

- 9.2 In the event that the Complaint is not made directly to the Deputy Director, Human Resources or a Faculty Human Resources Manager, it should be promptly referred to either the Deputy Director, Human Resources or a Faculty Human Resources Manager.

(i) Staff Member Complaints about Student Conduct

- 9.3 Where a Staff Member's Complaint refers to the conduct of a Student, the Deputy Director, Human Resources or the Faculty Human Resources Manager will refer the Complaint to the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team.

- 9.4 The Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team will update the Deputy Director, Human Resources or the Faculty Human Resources Manager on the progress of the complaints process as there is information to report. These updates will then be provided to the complainant.

(ii) Staff Member Complaints about Staff Member Conduct

- 9.5 If the Staff Member indicates that they would like their complaint dealt with informally/through an alternative resolution process, the Deputy Director, Human Resources or the Faculty Human Resources Manager will refer the Complaint to the appropriate Manager, in accordance with the Guidelines for Resolving Alleged Misconduct.

- 9.6 Method of seeking informal resolution include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Direct discussions between the parties.
- (b) Where the misconduct involves a Complaint:
 - (i) the complainant discussing the issue with a third party but not proceeding further;
 - (ii) a third party representing the complainant's concerns on their behalf;

- (iii) the complainant writing a letter to the other party.
- (c) Discussions between the parties and mediated by a third party. Where a third party is involved, the role of the third party will be to:
 - (i) assist the parties to a dispute or disagreement to find constructive solutions using a cooperative problem-solving process;
 - (ii) be even-handed to all parties and allow each party equal opportunity to participate;
 - (iii) promote respectful dialogue between the parties;
 - (iv) respect the confidentiality and privacy of all parties and deal with any issues sensitively to maintain the dignity and respect of the individuals involved, and encourage them to accord each other the same respect; and
 - (v) allow the parties to make their own decisions, including who will be informed of the outcome.

Note: An informal process will not normally be appropriate where the alleged misconduct may warrant some form of disciplinary penalty.

Formal Complaint Process

- 9.7 If the Staff Member indicates that they would like their Complaint dealt with on a formal basis, the Deputy Director, Human Resources or the Faculty Human Resources Manager will follow the process for investigating alleged misconduct set out in the Guidelines for Resolving Alleged Misconduct.
- 9.8 Prior to making a formal Complaint, the Staff Member may wish to seek advice. Persons who can be approached for this advice include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) Human Resources
 - (b) The complainant's Manager
 - (c) The Manager of the person complained about
 - (d) A Senior Manager
 - (e) The complainant's Union Representative, lawyer or other representative.

10. Information about the outcome of a complaint

- 10.1 The outcome of a Complaint will be determined by the findings of any investigation, the seriousness of the Complaint and, to the extent that is possible, the wishes of the complainant.

Note: If the complainant does not provide sufficient detail or evidence of a Complaint, a finding of misconduct may not be able to be made and the University will be unable to take disciplinary action against the person complained about.

Student Complaints

- 10.2 For Complaints that result in a formal process, and a subsequent finding of general misconduct or serious misconduct, the Student Conduct Statute sets out the process for establishing penalties for, and appeal rights from, findings against a student.
- 10.3 The Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team will inform student complainants of the outcome of their complaint on a confidential basis.
- 10.4 Where possible, this information may be delivered in person, to allow the complainant to ask questions and seek clarification about the effect of the outcome.

Staff Member Complaints

- 10.5 For Complaints that result in disciplinary proceedings, and a subsequent finding of misconduct or serious misconduct, the Staff Conduct Policy and Guidelines set out the process for establishing penalties for findings of misconduct against a Staff Member.
- 10.6 The Deputy Director, Human Resources or the Faculty Human Resources Manager will advise staff complainants, on a confidential basis, of whether or not their complaint or aspects of it have been upheld.
- 10.7 Where possible, this information may be delivered in person, to allow the complainant to ask questions and seek clarification about the effect of the outcome.

11. Other Members of the Community

- 11.1 If a complaint is made about any member of the University community who is not a staff member or a student, the Manager responsible for hiring the member of the community should seek advice from Legal Services about how to manage the complaint.

12. Interim Measures

- 12.1 Following receipt of a complaint, the University may take interim measures in accordance with the Staff Conduct Policy or the Student Conduct Statute.

13. Definitions

In this Procedure, unless the context otherwise requires:

Authorised Staff Disclosure Officer means Deputy Director, People and Capability, a Faculty Human Resources Manager, or Director, Risk and Assurance.

Related Documents and Information**14. Related Documents**

[Education and Training Act 2020](#)
[Victoria University of Wellington Act 1961](#)
[Employment Relations Act 2000](#)
[Human Rights Act 1993](#)
[Privacy Act 2020](#)

[Conflicts of Interest Statute](#)
[Guidelines for Addressing Alleged Misconduct](#)
[Sexual Harassment Response Policy](#)
[Staff Conduct Policy](#)
[Student Conduct Statute](#)

15. Document Management and Control*Essential Record*

Approver	Tumu Maruaia – Provost Director, People and Capability
Approval Date	8 August 2023
Effective Date	8 August 2023
Next Review Date	8 August 2026
Policy Sponsors	Tumu Maruaia – Provost; Director, People and Capability
Policy Contact	Manager, Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Extension 5023 Deputy Director, Human Resources Extension 5198

Modification History

Date	Approval Agency	Details
25 March 2025	Policy Owner	Minor amendment
11 March 2025	General Counsel	Minor amendment
19 March 2024	Policy Owner	Editorial corrections
8 August 2023	Tumu Maruaia – Provost Director, People and Capability	Full review
3 April 2023	General Counsel	Minor amendment. Added VUWSA and TEU contact details to the appendices.

Appendix 1: University support for Students and Staff Members who have experienced sexual harassment

Support services for Students

Student Interest and Conflict Resolution

Email: student-interest@vuw.ac.nz

Telephone: 04 463 5023 (business hours only)

Student Health Counselling (Mauri Ora)

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/student-health>

Telephone: 04 463 5308

Mauri Ora clinics on campus provide non-urgent health care for Students who have experienced sexual harassment. If a Student would like to see a doctor at Mauri Ora who has specialist training in sexual assault, they shall ask to see the triage nurse and arrange a non-urgent appointment. Mauri Ora GPs and Nurses are available for Monday to Friday from 8.30 am until 4.45 pm.

Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association (VUWSA) Advocacy Service

Email: advocate@vuwsa.org.nz

Text: 022 463 6984

Website: <https://www.vuwsa.org.nz/advocacy>

VUWSA Advocacy Service is independent from the University. It can provide information about options available to students before they make a formal complaint to the University .

ACC Find Support Programme

Find Support programme helps Students access ACC-funded support following sexual abuse or assault, in your time, on your terms.: <https://findsupport.co.nz/>

The Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team has worked with ACC to provide a specialist sexual assault counsellor on campus.

Alternatively, Students can directly contact ACC's Sensitive Claims Unit.

Disability Services, Student Support

Email: disability@vuw.ac.nz

Telephone: 04 463 6070

Disability Services works in partnership with students to strengthen the University's culture of inclusion and ensure students can fully participate and achieve their aspirations

Māori Student Support

Email: awhina@vuw.ac.nz

Website: www.victoria.ac.nz/awhina

Pasifika Student Support

Email: pasifika@vuw.ac.nz

Website: www.victoria.ac.nz/pasifika

The Pasifika Support Team are on campus to provide holistic support to Pasifika students.

Rainbow Student Support

Email: liam.bloomfield@vuw.ac.nz

Telephone: 04 463 6712

Our Rainbow and Inclusion Advisor works with our community to ensure that the University is a safe and inclusive environment for students who identify with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and sex characteristics.

International Student Experience Team

Email: international-support@vuw.ac.nz

Telephone: +6444635350

The International Student Experience Team can support international students who have experienced sexual harassment through meetings or conversations.

Support services for hall residents**Student Support Coordinators**

The Student Support Coordinators (SSCs) are registered health professionals who provide a confidential service for hall residents experiencing any health or wellbeing issues that may impact their ability to manage the demands of their living and academic environments. The SSCs liaise with faculties, student support services, and community services to ensure that residents can access the support required.

Contact Details

Weir House, Victoria House, 222 Willis and Uni Hall: emma.wareing@vuw.ac.nz

Boulcott Hall, Katherine Jermyn Hall and Everton Hall: hester.reich@vuw.ac.nz

Capital Hall, Helen Lowry and Willis Street Halls including Cumberland House and Education House: jasmine.daniel@vuw.ac.nz

Stafford House, Te Puni Village and Joan Stevens Hall: [appointment pending – in the meantime residents at these halls can contact any of the student support coordinators listed above].

Residential Advisors

Residential Advisors (RAs) support residents' transition into tertiary study, develop and maintain the hall community and provide leadership. RAs live on site and are assigned a group of residents. They will often be the first point of contact for residents needing assistance or support. RAs provide procedural assistance to students where they would like to make a complaint to the relevant Head of Hall.

Contact Details

Boulcott Hall: 463 4743 / 021 285 4743

Capital Hall: 022 563 3720

Joan Stevens Hall: 463 6834 / 021 966 834

Katharine Jermyn Hall: 022 563 9080

University Hall: 0800 UNIHALL

222 Willis: 022 563 3099

Weir House: 027 563 3700

Willis St. Halls: 027 563 4770

Everton Hall: 027 472 1026

Helen Lowry Hall: 027 240 2766

UniLodge: Stafford House: 027 469 4620

Te Puni Village: 027 563 9220

Victoria House: 027 440 9249

Support services for Staff Members

Authorised Staff Disclosure Officers

Authorised Staff Disclosure Officers are available to talk to staff about options for support, reporting to Police and informal and formal reporting through the University.

Website: <https://intranet.wgtn.ac.nz/staff/your-university/sexually-harmful-behaviours/authorised-disclosure-officers>

Tertiary Education Union – TEU

Email: nicki.wilford@teu.ac.nz

Telephone: 027 444 2893

Employee Advisory and Resolution Service (“EARS - Te Rauawa”)

EARS—Te Rauawa is a confidential, impartial and informal service that is independent of Human Resources at the University. This service allows staff to discuss their workplace concerns with an independent party and obtain advice and support on a confidential and off-the-record basis.

University staff can contact EARS Te Rauawa anonymously through the EARS Te Rauawa Staff Intranet page or by email to ears@vuw.ac.nz.

Counselling and support

TELUS Health (formerly Benestar) provides counselling and support to the University's staff. They are a global wellbeing company that provides Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) to support staff whose work is being affected by personal or work-related issues.

Telephone: 0800 360 364

Website: <https://www.benestar.com/>

For further information see: <https://intranet.wgtn.ac.nz/services-resources/health-safety-and-wellbeing/staff-wellbeing/emotional-and-social-wellbeing/counselling-and-support>

Tertiary Education Union – TEU

Email: nicki.wilford@teu.ac.nz

Telephone: 027 444 2893

Appendix 2: University support for Students and Staff Members who have been accused of sexual harassment

Support services for Students

Student Interest and Conflict Resolution

<https://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support/admin/conflict-resolution/student-interest-and-disputes-advisor>

Email: Student-Interest@vuw.ac.nz

Telephone: 04 463 5023 (business hours only)

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Email: advocate@vuwsa.org.nz

Text: 022 463 6984

Website: <https://www.vuwsa.org.nz/advocacy>

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Disability Services, Student Support

Email: disability@vuw.ac.nz

Telephone: 04 463 6070

Māori Student Support

Email: awhina@vuw.ac.nz

Website: www.victoria.ac.nz/awhina

Pasifika Student Support

Email: pasifika@vuw.ac.nz

Website: www.victoria.ac.nz/pasifika

Rainbow Student support

Email: rainbow@vuw.ac.nz or Georgia.andrews@vuw.ac.nz

Telephone: 04 463 6712

Support services for hall residents

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International Student Experience Team

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Support services for staff members

Tertiary Education Union – TEU

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Telephone: 027 444 2893

Authorised Staff Disclosure Officers

Authorised Staff Disclosure Officers are available to talk to staff about options for support, and the processes that will be followed by the University.

Website: <https://intranet.wgtn.ac.nz/staff/your-university/sexually-harmful-behaviours/authorised-disclosure-officers>

Employee Advisory and Resolution Service (“EARS – Te Rauawa”)

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Telephone: 0800 360 364

Website: <https://www.benestar.com/>

For further information see: <https://intranet.wgtn.ac.nz/services-resources/health-safety-and-wellbeing/staff-wellbeing/emotional-and-social-wellbeing/counselling-and-support>