



Appendix A - Research and reports on gender-based violence in higher education

Key report	
Change The Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2017)	<p>Released in 2017 by the Australian Human Rights Commission, the <i>Change the Course</i> report provided the first national dataset on the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment in universities based on a 2016 national survey. It found 1 in 4 university students experienced sexual harassment, disproportionately affecting women, people with a disability and the LGBTQI+ community.</p> <p>The survey also found low reporting rates and student satisfaction with university processes and support, indicating an urgent need for a reform in university approaches and processes. The report recommended a cultural shift within institutions as the initial step towards systematic change.</p> <p>The <i>Change the Course</i> report gave 9 recommendations for Australian universities and university residential colleges to follow. These recommendations focused on structural and cultural reforms to minimise the frequency, and effectively manage sexual harassment and assault in all university settings. Recommendations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ promote strong and equitable university governance○ a clear change in institution-wide values, and their response to sexual harm○ implementing preventative measures○ creating functional monitoring and evaluation structures○ ensuring student accommodation providers provide safe environments for residents.
Senate inquiry into current and proposed and sexual consent laws in Australia Final report (Senate Legal and Constitutional	<p>The <i>Current and proposed sexual consent laws in Australia Final Report</i> was released in 2023 by the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee. The final report outlines Australia's current consent laws and raised concerns regarding their effectiveness in providing protection and guidance for victim-survivors of sexual violence.</p>



<p>Affairs References Committee, 2023)</p>	<p>The report suggests that both government and non-government bodies put the wellbeing of victim-survivors as a top priority and commit time and finances to introduce measures such as education standards, ongoing research and refining current legislative frameworks.</p> <p>The report made a total of 17 recommendations for both government and non-government agencies to consider, all of which are designed to develop frameworks that will ensure victim-survivors have better access to the resources and support they need. Some of these recommendations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ implementing clear and affirmative consent standards○ increased and continual funding towards education, research and the development of trauma informed legal services.○ upskilling the education work force to effectively create and deliver sexual harm related programs.○ committing to collaborating and engaging with relevant stakeholders such as victim-survivors, state jurisdictions, TEQSA and education providers.○ increasing accessibility to instructions and materials for victim-survivors to navigate the reporting process, ensuring they are better supported to escalate reports.
<p>The Red Zone Report: An investigation into sexual violence and hazing in Australian university residential colleges (End Rape on Campus, 2018)</p>	<p>The <i>Red Zone Report</i> was a 2018 investigation into sexual violence and hazing in Australian university residential colleges conducted by End Rape on Campus. The report highlighted the risks to students during university orientation weeks, with increases in hazing, bullying, harassment and sexual assault. The report attempted to address these issues by reviewing the full breadth of available evidence, showing the normalisation of hazing and initiation rituals in university communities.</p> <p>The report outlined a total of 10 recommendations urging both systemic and cultural shifts to minimise sexual assault and harassment in university settings, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ improving oversight of respective student residences by the university and taking accountability for behaviours that occur on premises to create streamlined processes across both campus and accommodation○ ensuring equally accessible university complaints procedures and counselling services for university and college students○ reviewing the role of secondary schools in ‘feeding’ residential colleges to try and break systematic distribution misbehaviours and culture



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ criminalising harmful initiation practices known as ‘hazing’○ establishing a government taskforce to oversee responses to sexual assault in the education sector and introduce mandatory reporting from universities
Combative to Collaborative: International Perspectives on Prevention Sexual Violence at Australian Universities (Camille Schloeffel, 2023)	<p>The 2023 <i>Combative to Collaborative: International Perspectives on Preventing Sexual Violence at Australian Universities</i> report by Camille Schoeffel focuses on the prevalence of sexual assault in Australian universities and provides guidance on appropriate prevention. The report compares Australian university approaches to counterparts in the USA, Canada and the UK.</p> <p>The report outlines 7 core principles for effective prevention and 61 recommendations which provide a clear path for universities to follow. The key themes of these recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ universities should implement structures to prevent sexual assault on campus○ collaboration and activism are required to drive systematic and cultural change across the globe○ increased accountability and transparency is needed across universities regarding their reporting and support structures○ government intervention is necessary to make major reforms to see long lasting change
Connecting the Dots: Understanding sexual assault in university communities (End Rape on Campus, 2017)	<p>The 2017 <i>Connecting the dots</i> report by Professor Catharine Lumby, as part of the <i>End Rape on Campus Australia</i> campaign, explores the ongoing problem of sexual assault in Australian universities including the nature and extent of the issue, obstacles that students may face when reporting and accessing support and the historical context of university’s failure to respond to the issue. The report also focuses on how survivors’ needs can be best met and supported within tertiary institutions.</p> <p>Based on EROC’s research and findings during the curation of the report, they made several recommendations for changes in universities and beyond. Some of these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ develop the education sector to deliver on evidence-based findings and equip them with the support systems to properly manage student reports○ implement survivor-centric policies and procedures with functional record-keeping processes○ government commitment to funding support services and ongoing research○ implementation of a federal complaints mechanism to escalate student concerns.



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