



# **Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Management Framework, Policy and Procedure**

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## 1. PURPOSE

The Australis Business School (“Australis”) is committed to providing a respectful, safe, and flexible environment free from all forms of sexual assault and/or harassment. All Australis staff and students are expected to conduct themselves with respect, decency, and dignity. By successfully putting this philosophy into practise, Australis will be able to recruit and maintain talented staff and quality students, creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

For details of how Australis prevents and manages harassment (not of a sexual nature), bullying and discrimination, refer to the *Bullying, Discrimination, and Harassment Prevention and Management Policy and Procedure* are a part of that commitment.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy and procedure are applicable to all individuals, including students, staff members, teaching faculty, and contractors, who are involved or appointed by Australis while present on the campus or participating in an off-campus activity related to Australis, which also includes managed digital environments. It is the responsibility of both students and staff to maintain a safe, equitable, and productive environment at Australis. This includes avoiding any practises that may support or condone sexual assault and/or sexual harassment.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

The definitions below reference definitions in the Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector July 2020

(source: [https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf)).

**Sexual assault** includes a range of behaviours, all of which are unacceptable and constitute a crime. Sexual assault occurs when a person is forced, coerced or tricked into sexual acts against their will or without their consent, including when they have withdrawn their consent.

### **Sexual harassment**

While the definition of sexual harassment varies across Australian (and other) jurisdictions, it generally involves an unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which, in the circumstances, a reasonable person, aware of those circumstances, would anticipate the possibility that the person would feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated.

### **Consent to sexual activity**

While definitions for consent to sexual activities also vary between jurisdictions, consent is essentially an agreement between people to engage in a sexual activity. Other important elements of consent are that it is mutual, freely given, informed, certain and clear, enthusiastic, reversible, specific and required throughout the activity.

The age of consent to sexual activity varies across Australia and across the world. The age at which a person is able to legally consent to sexual activity is 16 across most parts of Australia, with the exception of South Australia and Tasmania, where the age of consent is 17. The age of consent can also vary across some parts of Australia if there is a relationship of authority between the two parties, such as between someone in a teaching or student service role, where the age of consent then becomes 18 years. Internationally, the age of sexual consent can vary greatly and be as low as 12 years in some countries. It is important that international students receive information about the age of sexual consent in Australia. Students who are from countries where the age of consent to sexual activity is lower than it is in Australia might otherwise assume that the age of consent is the same as in their country of origin.

Also, see the *Australis Glossary of Terms* for other definitions. The following examples, adapted from the University of Tasmania's University Behaviour Procedure ([https://www.utas.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/1368554/Behaviour-Procedure.pdf](https://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1368554/Behaviour-Procedure.pdf)), provides good guidance for Australis staff and students in terms of what could be viewed as sexual harassment or sexual assault behaviours.

Examples of **sexual harassment** may include (but are not limited to):

- Staring or leering at a person in a sexual manner
- Standing deliberately too close to someone or deliberately brushing against someone as you walk past
- Displaying pornographic or sexually explicit material (such as posters and screen savers)
- Sending sexually explicit emails, SMS messages
- Inappropriate advances on social networking sites
- Sexual insults or taunting
- Requests for sex or repeated unwanted requests to go out on dates
- Making promises or threats in return for sexual favours
- Intrusive questions or remarks about a person's sexual activities

Examples of **sexual assault** may include (but are not limited) to:

- Two people in a relationship start engaging in sexual activity but Person A changes their mind and asks to stop. Person B refuses to stop and forces sexual activity.
- A student taking advantage of another intoxicated student at a party by encouraging them back to their room and engaging in sexual activity when the student is unable to give consent due to being affected by alcohol.
- A tutor manipulates a student to engage in sexual acts in exchange for better marks.

- A staff member who has been continually making advances towards another staff member proceeds to force themselves onto that staff person while they are alone in a meeting room, attempting to kiss and touch them under their clothing.

#### **4. POLICY PRINCIPLES AND SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT (SASH-PM) FRAMEWORK**

Australis have a zero tolerance to any form of sexual assault or sexual harassment. This policy and procedures must reflect the diversity of students and staff members who may experience sexual assault or sexual harassment, for example people from LGBTIQ+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people with disabilities. Australis will also establish informal networks to support diverse staff and students. Any associated forms, reporting and surveying will take the accessibility and language needs, and the sexuality and gender identity of participants, into consideration.

Australis have designed and implemented the Australis Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Management (SASH-PM) Framework, which aims to understand, prevent, identify and respond to Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH). This framework is based on the nine principles detailed in the Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector July 2020. This is summarised in figure 1 below (Figure 1 source: [https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf))

Figure 1. Nine principles for managing sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH)



Australis's Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Management (SASH-PM) Framework has three focus areas that are aligned to these nine principles in Figure 1, as illustrated in Figure 2 below. Each focus area has several implementation areas to ensure that all focus areas are implemented comprehensively and effectively across Australis.

Furthermore, Australis will use the summary checklist detailed in Appendix 3 – Summary Checklist, as a tool for Australis to cross check that its implementation of this policy and

procedure address the actions in Appendix B: Summary Checklist from the Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector July 2020 (source: [https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf)).

Figure 2. Australis SASH-PM Framework

<b>Australis SASH-PM Framework – 3 Focus areas</b>	<b>Implementation areas</b>	<b>Alignment to Principles<sup>1</sup></b>
Focus area 1: Understanding and Prevention	1.1 Supporting common understanding and prevention through training and support 1.2 Promoting and providing a safe environment 1.3 Providing education and information materials that is comprehensive, widely available and regularly updated 1.4 Providing accessible and timely support	1, 4, 5, 6
Focus area 2: Governance	2.1 Leadership, governance and resources 2.2 SASH prevention and response taskforce 2.3 Supportive policies and procedures	1, 2, 3, 9
Focus area 3: Response and Management	3.1 Incident report and management 3.2 Continuous improvement	1, 6, 7, 8, 9

## Focus Area 1 – Understanding and Prevention

This focus area is about fostering a common understanding where all parties involved in SASH are treated with respect and all parties should be heard with compassion and without judgement or blame. Australis supports students and staff members who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment, irrespective of where the incident occurred.

Regardless of gender, culture or background, no person's experience of sexual assault or sexual harassment, or the extent to which it impacts on their lives, can be assumed to be the

<sup>1</sup> Good Guidance Note Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector July 2020 (source: [https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf))



same as another's. For this reason, each response should be informed by the nature of the experience, and led by considerations of the needs of the student or staff member who experienced the sexual assault or sexual harassment.

This focus area has the following three implementation areas that are detailed under their respective headings below:

1. Supporting common understanding and prevention through training and support
2. Promoting a safe environment
3. Providing education and information materials

## 1.1 Supporting common understanding and prevention through training and support

Australis provides students and staff with training to help them identify, respond to, and resolve the incident as required. Australis will also ensure that advice and support is accessible, timely and linked with appropriate services for all parties involved. For further details on how accessible and timely support is provided, refer to focus area *1.4 Providing accessible and timely support*.

### 1.1.1 Training staff and students to recognise, prevent and respond to SASH

Australis will provide the Epigeum Consent Matters: Boundaries, Respect, and Positive Intervention training to all Australis staff and students. Training is provided to all staff as part of their induction. Training is provided to all students as part of their orientation.

The Consent Matters: Boundaries, Respect, and Positive Intervention course has been updated to provide current, inclusive, and scalable training on sexual consent, communication and relationships, and bystander intervention. This new edition draws on the latest developments in culture, law, and global best practices to encourage good communication, clear boundaries, and mutual respect in relationships, as well as exploring ways that students can support others and make a positive impact in their community.

The Consent Matters: Boundaries, Respect, and Positive Intervention course provides up-to-date education on key concepts through a wide range of interactive multimedia activities, including live polls, animations, and quizzes. The realistic scenarios and peer perspectives that feature throughout the course represent the experiences of diverse student communities. The course has also been reviewed by a language accessibility expert to ensure that the course caters to students with English as a second language. This course can be conducted online and is concise and fully flexible, with a streamlined, modular structure that can be integrated into a blended learning approach to complement face-to-face workshops. This course includes 1 hour of core activity training and 1.5 hours of additional information and activities across three modules. It is a fully interactive, evidence-

based online course which helps staff and students understand sexual consent and promotes positive change in Australia's higher education community. Developed with an expert panel of advisors, authors, and student and staff reviewers, the latest edition of the award-winning Consent Matters course provides current, interactive, evidence based, accessible and inclusive training on sexual consent, communication, relationships, and bystander intervention (for further details see appendix 6).

The table below summarises the overview and syllabus of each module.

<b>Module</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Syllabus</b>
Module 1: Thinking about consent	This module looks at what consent means in normal, everyday situations before exploring why it is important to have sexual consent. It uses activities, animations and scenarios to help students fully understand when consent has and has not been given, and how things like alcohol and drugs impact on capacity to consent. Common misconceptions around consent and sexual violence are broken down and explored. The module ends with information on the support available from a range of national and local organisations, as well as insights into how to support a friend who discloses sexual violence or abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The consent conversation</li> <li>• Why consent matters</li> <li>• Sex and consent</li> <li>• Consent misconceptions</li> <li>• Consent 101</li> <li>• How consent works in practice</li> <li>• Practice scenario: Alcohol and consent</li> <li>• Support</li> </ul>
Module 2: Communication skills and relationships	This part of the course asks students to consider what they value in a relationship and suggests approaches for talking about sex with partners. It provides activities, animations and scenarios to help students consider their own boundaries and how to communicate effectively with their partner/s. The module explores how to recognise other people's boundaries and signs indicating when to stop or pause. It also enables students to identify the indicators of unhealthy relationships. The module ends with information on the support available from a range of national and local organisations, as well as insights into how to support a friend who discloses sexual violence or abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication and consent</li> <li>• Sex and relationship misconceptions</li> <li>• Let's talk about sex</li> <li>• Boundaries</li> <li>• Stop, Pause, Go</li> <li>• Relationships and respect</li> <li>• Practice scenario: Pressure, communication skills and respect</li> <li>• Support</li> </ul>
Module 3: Looking out for others	This module empowers students to look out for others and intervene when they see behaviour that makes them uncomfortable, such as verbal, physical or sexual harassment. Based on 'social norm' theory, students will reflect on instances when they saw a problematic situation and wanted to intervene. Demonstrating the 'true norm' that most people want	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's positive intervention?</li> <li>• Difficult situations</li> <li>• What holds us back?</li> <li>• Choosing to step in</li> <li>• Becoming an active bystander</li> <li>• Different ways of stepping in</li> </ul>

	to help and do the right thing, the module explores common barriers to bystander intervention and show that students can intervene safely and compassionately by understanding how to reduce or overcome these barriers. Students will reflect on the different ways to intervene in a situation, from confrontation through to shifting the focus. The module ends with information on the support available from a range of national and local organisations, as well as insights into how to support a friend who discloses sexual violence or abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice scenarios: Looking out for others</li> <li>• Support</li> </ul>
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The details in the table above is sourced from:

<https://www.epigeum.com/courses/support-wellbeing/consent-matters-second-edition/>.

Australis is also committed to providing staff and students with ongoing SASH training on a regular basis and providing information materials that is comprehensive, widely available and regularly updated (see SASHA-PM Framework focus area 1.3 for further details)

When responding to students or staff members that disclose or report an incident and/or seek assistance, Australis will observe the following:

- All parties treated fairly, with dignity and respect and heard with compassion and without judgement or blame.
- Students or staff members that are the first to hear of the incident and/or seek assistance must be heard with the assumption that their report is genuine (this also applies to the alleged perpetrator's story) and afforded privacy for all conversations.
- Students or staff members that disclose or report an incident will be provided with information about options for reporting within, and external to, the Australis and not be discouraged from making a formal complaint. They will be free to decide which, if any, disclosure or report to make. They will be provided with access to support and responded to in a timely manner. They will also be reassured of the confidentiality of their disclosure and assured that they and the alleged perpetrator will be interviewed by different staff members.
- Students or staff members that disclose or report an incident will be kept informed of any action Australis takes in relation to their disclosure, report or complaint and the expected timelines for resolutions of matters reported to Australis.

Australis aim to minimise, and not prolong, responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment, to avoid the potential of any additional trauma or harm to all individuals involved.

## 1.2. Promoting and providing a safe environment

Australis is committed to promoting and providing a safe learning and working environment to support staff and student wellbeing. Australis considers a safe environment including the experience of students and staff as they travel to/from learning and working, enter/exit, and enjoy the learning environment. Australis also considers how, why and when students and staff engage with the environment and identify aspects of the environment that may limit safety. For further information, see *Health and Safety Policy*.

Australis provides information and training to raise awareness of SASH and how the Australis SASH-PM framework supports a safe physical environment that also supports safe behaviours, including on campus, student accommodation (if applicable) and work placement.

Australis is aware that personal safety is the responsibility of everybody, not just of individuals. When Australis publishes safety tips such as: 'Never leave a drink unattended' or 'When you are out, stay with friends and people you can trust', these will be accompanied by bystander information such as 'Create a distraction', 'Ask directly', 'Refer to authority' and 'Enlist others'<sup>2</sup>.

Australis will focus on community-oriented responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment and provides information and training so that students and staff understand that the experience of sexual assault or sexual harassment is never the fault of the person who experiences it. This still holds true if the sexual assault or sexual harassment occurs in situations that safety tips suggest people avoid.

Furthermore, Australis staff trained in first responding and first aid, will be available whenever people have access to the Australis campus. Australis will provide training to staff and students from experts in the field, such as from the Mate Program (<https://matebystander.edu.au/training-options/>), Full Stop (<https://fullstop.org.au/training/for-students-and-educators>), and/or Epigeum (<https://www.epigeum.com/>). Australis will also establish good networks and collaborative relationships with local police and sexual assault services that can also contribute to safer communities.

<https://www.epigeum.com/courses/support-wellbeing/consent-matters-second-edition/>

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<sup>2</sup> Good Guidance Note Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector July 2020 (source: [https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf))

### 1.2.1 Online learning environment

Australis recognises that the online learning environment, including online classes, discussion forums, and learning groups established via the learning management system and social media are not immune to harmful communication, inappropriate comments and abuse. This policy and procedure defines acceptable behaviours specific to the online learning environment which includes factors such as gender, race, sexual orientation and disability can heighten the risk of technology-facilitated abuse. Australis will provide training to students and staff to enhance safety and security on and off campus, see *Health and Safety Policy* for further details.

### 1.2.2 Student accommodation and events (social and learning related)

Australis takes an active interest in the wellbeing of its students and will actively use our influence and governance links to ensure that the accommodation Australis promotes, fosters a safe environment for their students. Australis will work collaboratively with the relevant student accommodation services to implement preventative measures, such as evidence-based sexual assault and sexual harassment education programs, as well as programs to counter the harmful effect of alcohol and drug abuse. Australis recognises that identifying the risks inherent in student accommodation and preparing risk management plans for events are important steps. Living arrangements that foster positive relationships and prevent poor behaviour will be encouraged. For example, bathroom facilities should be lockable and provide adequate privacy, especially if they are shared facilities. Students who live in residential accommodation will also be offered bystander, first responder and consent training as part of their orientation and throughout their stay. Staff in student accommodation should also receive first responder training, including policies and procedures that cover the following and more<sup>3</sup>.

- complaints procedures, including mechanisms for reporting and investigation
- access to support services
- staff positions identified as first responders or as receiving disclosures
- definitions of sexual assault and sexual harassment behaviours, behavioural
- examples and consequences
- the scope of locations which the policy covers
- monitoring and reporting of incidents
- confidentiality and privacy
- anonymous reporting
- options for reporting externally
- the level of supervision during activities at student accommodation

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<sup>3</sup> Good Guidance Note Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector July 2020 (source: [https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf))

- response to hazing and other initiation ceremonies
- training requirements and procedures for managing events

Procedures for how accommodation managers respond to incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment in student accommodation should include liaison with Australis to ensure:

- students who experience sexual assault or sexual harassment receive support
- the impact on students (both alleged perpetrator and those who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment) is minimised
- the incident is resolved efficiently and effectively.

Australis recognises that alcohol consumption is a risk factor associated with sexual assault and sexual harassment. Accommodation providers should have procedures in place to guide students who are holding social events on how to minimise the risk to guests, such as banning alcohol at particular events, banning hazing, and implementing greater controls for accommodation provider staff to approve activities.

Similarly, Australis will consider the potential risks relating to community interaction during fieldwork, on placement, at social clubs, and at sporting events. Australis should require members of clubs to undertake training so that they are aware of the risks inherent in social gatherings, particularly where alcohol is consumed, and/or to undertake training (in relation to bystander awareness or receiving disclosures).

### 1.2.3 Auditing the learning and working environment

Australis will be conducting an audit of the learning and working environment on a regular basis to identify opportunities for action to improve student and staff safety on campus (at least annually). Australis staff trained in first responding and first aid, will be available whenever people have access to the campus.

## 1.3. Providing education and information materials that is comprehensive, widely available and regularly updated

All Australis student and staff members should know how to confidently prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment as a result of training. Training and educational material and information will be distributed through multiple modes, such as: email, through posters in common areas, as part of student orientation, staff induction, open and community days, and on the Australis website.

### 1.3.1 Accessibility to information

Australis is committed to fostering a culture that encourages the public provision of information about the prevention and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Australis recognises that not talking about sexual assault and sexual harassment condones

a culture of sexual assault and sexual harassment, as potential perpetrators know that they are less likely to be reported, students and staff members who have experienced it are less likely to know where to report the behaviour, and fewer people have been trained as active bystanders.

Australis provides information and training to all staff and students to ensure that they understand:

- which behaviours constitute sexual assault or sexual harassment and the consequences of these behaviours
- how to have respectful relationships (including between staff, tutors, teachers, students)
- what consent means
- how to interpret social situations (particularly involving alcohol consumption)
- how bystanders can respond.

The provision of information and education is necessary to minimise behaviours that lead to sexual assault and sexual harassment, and to support people who may be in a position to respond. Any information that has the potential to trigger memories of traumatic events in people who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment should be accompanied by a warning and contact details for 24/7 support services. Information about contact people, how to report an incident, policies, procedures, training, education, first responder guidance, definitions, emergency response, counselling and academic support in relation to sexual assault and sexual harassment will be easily accessible on the Australis public facing webpage. Information about privacy and confidentiality, and particular legislative requirements where the student who has experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment is under the age of 18, will also be included on the Australis public website. The information on the Australis website will be clear and sufficient for members of the community to understand the incident reporting process. Information will include links to the relevant forms or policies, and support students' and staff members' who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment trust that Australis has the capacity to complete a fair process in alignment with the Australis SASH-PM Framework.

During the design of information material, Australis will consider the needs of its student cohort, especially accessibility, language and cultural circumstances.

### International students

For international students in the cohort, translation of the most pertinent information into at least the most common languages within the cohort will be considered. The provision of definitions of sexual assault and sexual harassment are especially important for international students as their culture of origin might have very different definitions of these terms. Also included in the translated information should be where to report and what to expect when reporting. International students should be informed that their visa will not be affected if they report an incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment and that they will receive the same advice and support as domestic students.

### 1.3.2 Information to support decisions

Australis recognises that providing clear information to people about the decisions they will face as they consider disclosing or reporting their experience of sexual assault or sexual harassment is very important. The reporting student or staff member should be informed of any relevant mandatory requirements as soon as possible. Whether an adult student or staff member who experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment decides to report to Australis, or to the police, and whether they will seek counselling and manage their trauma without reporting, is a decision for them. Alleged perpetrators also be provided with clear information about what they can expect, and the assistance available to them.

All students will be advised that Australis is able to suspend or cancel a student's enrolment if the student engages in sexual harassment or sexual assault. In the case of international students, Australis will report such changes to the student's enrolment to the Australian Government department responsible for immigration and the student should seek advice about potential impact on their student visa. Also, it will be clearly stated that experiencing sexual assault or sexual harassment, or reporting an incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment, will not impact on their enrolment or student visa.

Australis will ensure that material that develops awareness (such as posters and promotional merchandise) will be visually accessible. Digital learning platforms will also be used on a regular basis to convey messaging about respectful relationships and support services. Australis provides training and guidance, including how Australis staff manage their relationship with students, refer to appendix 2 for further details.

## 1.4 Providing accessible and timely support

ASO will display information about support services in prominent places on the Australis website and around the Australis campus to ensure that students and staff are aware of the support services available. The Australis student support part of the website will include the counselling services and academic support that are available for the support of people involved in sexual assault and sexual harassment, including witnesses, and provide contact details to access these services. All Australis staff and students will have access to professional counselling services and other support services, refer to appendix 4 for details.

### 1.4.1 Counselling

Australis will provide staff and students with counselling and support services that will be provided by professionals who are adequately trained to respond to people suffering trauma following sexual assault or sexual harassment.

Australis has an established external counselling service that will be provided to staff and students at no cost (Australis will cover the costs). This service, in conjunction with Australis trained staff, provides the following:



- Provides staff and students with access to internal and/or external counselling services that is timely and available outside normal business hours (24/7) and will be linked in with any daytime services available on campus.
- The period of time, in which people can access support services will not be limited and urgent (acute) and immediate response is offered.
- The number of times a student or staff member who has experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment can access counselling will not be limited, particularly if a complaint process is prolonged.

Australis will monitor support services to ensure services provided are relevant to the needs of the Australis community, are timely, effective and adequate. Waiting times to access counselling and support will be monitored and managed.

The ratio of counselling staff to the number of students in Australis can provide a good benchmark for whether the service is adequately staffed. The International Association of Counselling Services recommends a ratio of one full-time equivalent counsellor to every 1000-1500 students<sup>4</sup>.

#### 1.4.2 Assistance for alleged perpetrators

Australis recognises that alleged perpetrators of sexual assault and sexual harassment may require assistance to ensure they understand the process and how to access procedural and emotional assistance. Australis will ensure that the alleged perpetrator is provided with contact details to relevant services. If the alleged perpetrator wishes, Australis Student Support Officer (for students) or Australis Administration and HR Manager (for staff) will refer them to the external service.

A person charged with a criminal offence may be remanded in custody for a brief period or until the matter proceeds to trial. In this case, Australis may need to make arrangements for them to take the appropriate leave from their work or study commitments. Alternately, the alleged perpetrator may be released into the community on bail, home detention or some other kind of order, and any arrangements made for them to continue with their work or studies will need to consider compliance with those conditions as well.

Australis will consider the precautionary actions to take to ensure the immediate safety of all parties involved and communicate these actions, and the importance to adhere to them, to all parties involved. For further points on these actions, refer to focus area 3.1 *Taking precautionary actions*.

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<sup>4</sup> International Association of Counselling Services. Statement regarding recommended Staff to Student Ratios, <https://iacsinc.org/staff-to-student-ratios/>.

Australis will provide information about the internal and external appeal processes to the alleged perpetrator. Australis will also assist the alleged perpetrator throughout any appeals process.

### 1.4.3 Academic support

Australis will consider what support may be required for all parties in terms of academic assistance. This support will be extended to all parties regardless of where the incident occurred. This includes support for staff members and students who have experienced family violence.

A student should not be required to disclose the incident to several people at Australis in order to get academic support (for example, an extension of time required to submit class work or a change of exam schedule). For further details on how special consideration is provided in terms of academic support, refer to the *Assessment Policy and Procedure* and *Student Welfare, Wellbeing and Support Policy and Procedure*.

## Focus Area 2 – Governance

This focus area is about leadership and governance that ensures appropriate actions are taken across Australis. The leaders at Australis are central to fostering and maintaining a culture that is open and transparent in the prevention of, and response to, sexual assault and sexual harassment. Australis leaders should model respectful behaviour by engaging with, and taking responsibility for, Australis's response and the wellbeing of the community. Australis recognises that openness, transparency and communication are the hallmarks of effective and efficient prevention of, and response to, incidents of sexual assault or sexual harassment and strives to embed these into its culture.

As part of its *Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure*, Australis details that individuals are vetted to determine their suitability as staff, including:

- Gaining character reference checks and testimonials from employers as required to ascertain if the person has resigned from their previous role while an investigation against them was ongoing or if they have breached the employer's disciplinary framework and the nature of any breaches or alleged breaches.
- Conducting Police checks as required.

This focus area has the following three implementation areas that are detailed under their respective headings below:

1. Leadership, governance and resources
2. SASH prevention and response taskforce
3. Supportive policies and procedures

## 2.1. Leadership, governance and resources

The Board of Directors has the responsibility that Australis's legal, regulatory, financial and social obligations and responsibilities are met, including ensuring the wellbeing and safety for Australis's students and staff. This is further detailed in the *Australis Governance Charter and Delegations Framework*. To ensure that the Board of Directors maintain adequate oversight, regular reporting of sexual assault and sexual harassment incident data from the Chief Executive Officer to the Board of Directors will support regular and ongoing monitoring, consideration and action.

The Board of Directors will also consider the funding required to establish and maintain systems and processes to prevent, identify and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment, including sourcing relevant expertise, if and when required. This will be reviewed at the Board of Directors meetings when the Chief Executive Officer presents the Financial Update and/or when regular reporting of sexual assault and sexual harassment incident data is presented to the Board of Directors.

Australis will actively use their influence and governance links to ensure student accommodation services establish a safe environment for students and staff. If and as applicable, this can be achieved through representation on each other's governing boards, stipulation of measures to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the service provider agreement, and close communication between Australis and applicable accommodation/service providers when incidents occur.

## 2.2. SASH prevention and response taskforce

After its registration is granted by TEQSA as an approved Institute of Higher Education (IHE), Australis will establish a SASH prevention and response taskforce responsible for the ongoing implementation and improvement of measures to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment. The Australis SASH prevention and response taskforce will bring people with different perspectives to work together on this challenge. To highlight the emphasis and high priority Australis place on SASH prevention and response, this taskforce will include Australis's most senior leaders, including the Chief Executive Officer, Administration and HR Manager, Dean and Course Co-ordinator.

This taskforce should have broad representation from both within and outside of Australis. At a minimum, the group will include students, academic staff, and administrative staff. The taskforce aims to have diversity amongst its members. This might include the representation of groups such as LGBTIQ+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people with disabilities.

The taskforce terms of reference are included in appendix 1 and highlights that the taskforce meets on a regular and ongoing basis, and will be invested with the power and resources to create change. All members of the group would be offered relevant training, support and access to counselling in case they experience distress.

## 2.3. Supportive Policies and Procedures

Australis have a context-appropriate framework of interrelated sexual assault and sexual harassment policies and procedures designed to prevent, identify, record, and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment. These include:

- Stand-alone sexual assault and sexual harassment policies and procedures
- Code of conduct
- Critical Incident Management and Business Continuity Policy and Procedure
- Health and safety policy
- Non-Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Staff Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Student Welfare, Wellbeing and Support Policy and Procedure

These policies and procedures are available on the Australis website with cross-referencing as required.

All Australis policies, procedures and related documents should be inclusive in language, supportive in tone, and extensively disseminated throughout the Australis community in a variety of online and on-campus locations.

## Focus Area 3 – Response and Management

This focus area outlines Australis's measures to receive and respond appropriately to the various options of internal disclosure, formal reporting or reporting to the police (implementation area 3.1 *Incident reporting and taking precautionary actions*). The different approaches to a police investigation and the provider's internal misconduct process are also detailed. This focus area also outlines Australis's approach to continuous improvement and how it ensures ongoing innovation, evaluation and improvement of SASH prevention and response measures (implementation area 3.2 *Continuous Improvement*).

The four key steps in the response and management of SASH allegations are summarised in the table below with details provided in the following sections.

<b>Key steps and Description</b>	<b>Relevant sections in this policy and procedure to be referenced</b>
<b>1. Incident reporting options and process</b> Australis has several reporting pathways to facilitate reporting. Disclosures allow the student or staff member who has experienced the sexual assault or sexual harassment to access support without having to undergo a formal reporting process or participate in a misconduct process. If the student or staff member who has experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment wishes to have the incident investigated by Australis, a formal report is required.	3.1.1 Incident reporting options and process. Specifically refer to Figure 3 Australis reporting options and process flowchart.
<b>2. Initial response to reports</b> Students or staff members who have provided their contact details would have their reports acknowledged within no more than 24 hours. Students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment will be directed to the support services available to them, and confidentiality requirements should not prevent students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment from discussing the incident with support people.	3.1.2 Initial response to reports. Refer to appendix 4 for Australis Points of Contact for reporting SASH allegations. 3.1.3 Mandatory reporting. 3.1.5 Record keeping. 3.1.6 Vexatious complaint.
<b>3. Investigation of reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment</b> All reports, whether formal, informal or anonymous should be made to the contacts provided in appendix 4. All reports will be reviewed and reported to the SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce if required. When a student or staff chooses to make a formal report to Australis, the details provided in sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4 below, will be followed.	3.1.4 Investigation of reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment 3.1.3 Mandatory reporting 3.1.5 Record keeping 3.1.6 Vexatious complaint
<b>4. Continuous improvement</b> Australis will ensure that its prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment is monitored and evaluated which leads to process improvements. Australis aims to deliver a system that will prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment effectively. The Australis SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce play an important role in ongoing improvement and also provide a measure of progress.	3.2 Continuous improvement

### 3.1 Incident reporting and taking precautionary actions

Australis recognises that an important part of the early response to the disclosure or report of sexual assault or sexual harassment is the implementation of precautionary actions designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff, and to preserve a provider's capacity to effectively deal with a disclosure or report.

Precautionary actions are non-disciplinary actions and may include arrangements to ensure that students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment and the alleged perpetrator do not encounter each other in class, in accommodation, or on campus. They should be considered on the basis to minimise further trauma to the student or staff who experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment but also that no determination has been made about a disclosure or report, and should be without prejudice to any person who is the subject of a disclosure or report. These arrangements will be monitored and regularly reviewed.

Where possible, Australis will attempt to put in place precautionary actions that have the least impact on both students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment and the alleged perpetrator. Where a choice is necessary, for example, regulating access to shared learning spaces, each case will be considered carefully, having regard to the interests of students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment and the alleged perpetrator, as well as the broader interests of the provider (including the capacity to continue to provide education to other students).

### 3.1.1 Incident reporting options and process

Australis has several reporting pathways to facilitate reporting. Disclosures allow the student or staff member who has experienced the sexual assault or sexual harassment to access support without having to undergo a formal reporting process or participate in a misconduct process. If the student or staff member who has experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment wishes to have the incident investigated by Australis, a formal report is required. Reporting to the police is also an option. The reporting options<sup>5</sup>:

- include procedures covering each reporting pathway (disclosure and whether these are recorded, formal report, reporting to police)
- include a clear outline of what to expect for each reporting pathway
- allow various modes of receiving the report (online form, face-to-face, telephone or email, through a first responder network)
- include whether third-parties can make a report (such as someone who may have witnessed an incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment)
- include clear stipulations about if, and under which circumstances, the provider will report incidents to the police.

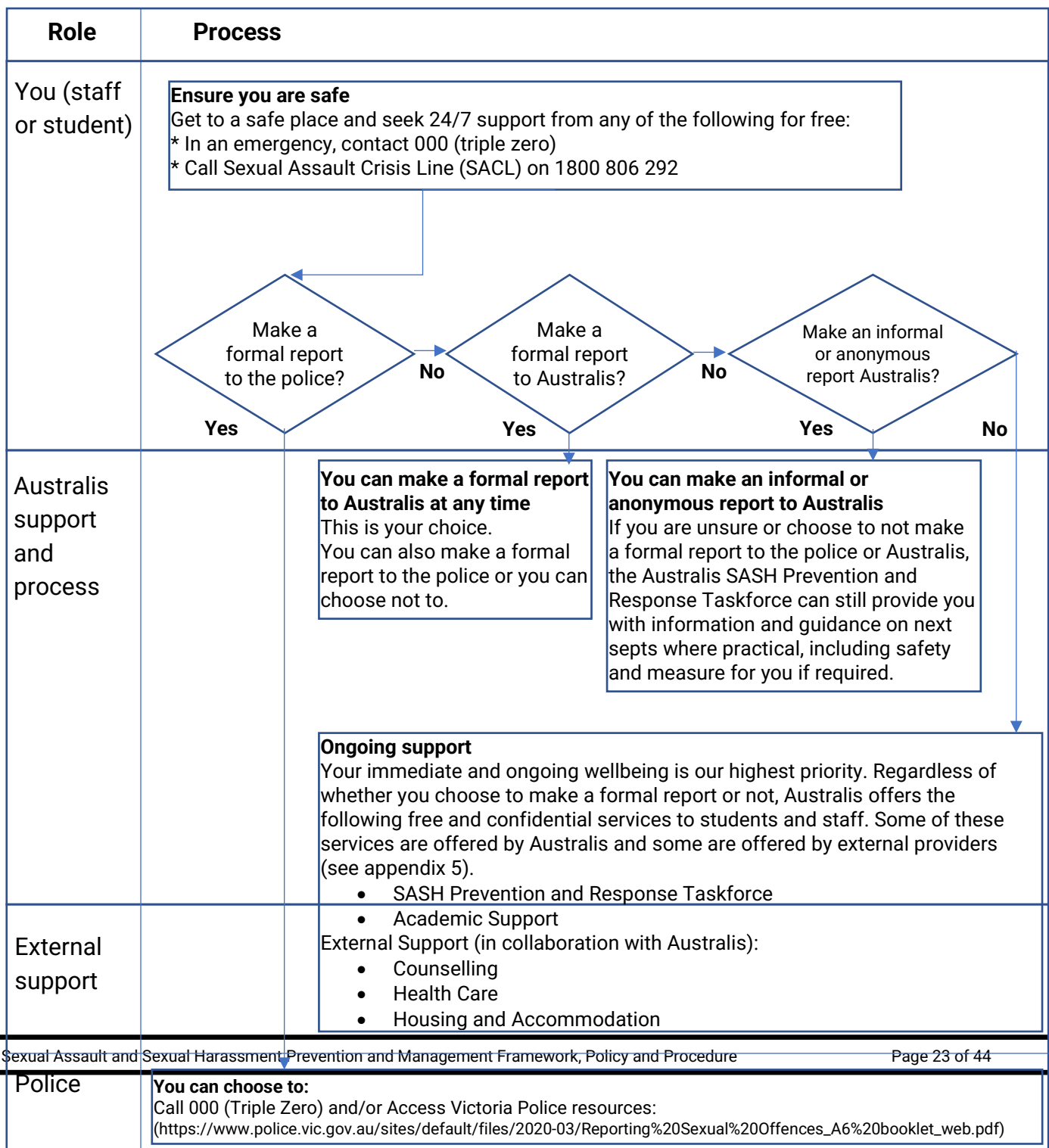
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<sup>5</sup> Good Guidance Note Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector July 2020 (source: [https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf))

Australis will ensure that information about these reporting pathways is available and easy to access for all staff and students. The Australis reporting options and process is summarised in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Australis reporting options and process flowchart**

Follow this flowchart if sexual assault or sexual harassment has occurred. Australis offers the following support even if it has not happened on campus. It is your choice which path you take and Australis will always respect and support your decision throughout the process even if you change your mind which is okay. Your health and wellbeing is our first priority and we encourage you to use any and all of the free confidential services available to you if you choose to.





### 3.1.2 Initial response to reports

When a student or staff chooses not to make a formal report to the police or Australis, they can choose to make an informal or anonymous report to Australis. In this case, the SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce can still provide information and guidance on next steps where practical, including safety and measure if required.

All reports, whether formal, informal or anonymous should be made to the contacts provided in appendix 4. All reports will be reviewed and reported to the SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce if required.

When a student or staff chooses to make a formal report to Australis, the details provided in sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4 below, will be followed.

Australis will ensure that staff likely to receive disclosures or reports are trained as first responders. This will ensure that students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment are treated with dignity and respect, the alleged perpetrator is treated with fairness and offered assistance, the relevant policies and procedures are implemented in the appropriate manner, and the collection of data is appropriate to an administrative process, rather than a criminal investigation. To facilitate reporting, contact details for staff trained as first responders will be easy to find and their role will be explained on the Australis website which is publicly available, refer to appendix 4 for Australis Points of Contact for reporting SASH allegations.

Students or staff members who have provided their contact details would have their reports acknowledged within no more than 24 hours. Students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment will be directed to the support services available to them, and confidentiality requirements should not prevent students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment from discussing the incident with support people.

All Australis staff will receive first responder training from experts in the field, such as from the Mate Program (<https://matebystander.edu.au/training-options/>), Full Stop (<https://fullstop.org.au/training/for-students-and-educators>), and/or Epigeum (<https://www.epigeum.com/>).

### 3.1.3 Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporting is an obligation in some jurisdictions in Australia to report cases in which it is suspected that a serious offence has been committed. Legal advice should be sought to ensure that the requirements of the relevant jurisdiction have been met. Suspected cases of child abuse and neglect also fall under the mandatory reporting requirements in Australia.



When a student or staff member reports behaviour that Australis suspects may constitute criminal behaviour, Australis will advise the student or staff member who experienced the sexual assault or sexual harassment of the option of reporting to the police. Australis will support the students and staff if they choose to report such matters to the police, but will not require them to do so.

If Australis decides to report a sexual assault or sexual harassment matter to the police, Australis will inform the student or staff member who experienced the incident, and (where applicable) the person who made the report or disclosure, as soon as possible about the decision to report the matter case to the police.

Students or staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment can access free 24 hour crisis care for sexual assault from the Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASA).

CASA phone number: 1800 806 292

Open: 24 hours a day

CASA also offers the Sexual Assault Crisis Line (SACL), a free and confidential after hours emergency telephone service, available weeknights 5pm–9am and 24 hours a day on weekends and public holidays on 1800 806 292.

CASA can help with:

- counselling and support
- deciding whether you want to make a report to police
- making sure you have information about your rights and options and advocating for you
- assessing your safety and protection needs and helping you make a safety plan
- supporting family members, loved ones and carers
- helping you communicate with police, forensic and other medical and health personnel
- referrals to other community support services.

Victims of Crime Helpline

The Victims of Crime Helpline 1800 819 817 can also provide advice and support with:

- referrals to other services
- reporting sexual assault to police and other agencies
- applying for financial assistance
- advice on how to improve your personal safety.

Further support details in appendix 5 will also be provided to the student or staff. Students or staff do not need to report the assault to police to get help.

### 3.1.4 Investigation of reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment

Australis will keep clear, accurate and comprehensive records of all matters in relation to every incident. This should include (but is not limited to) copies of reports or disclosures, interviews with students and staff, and (where relevant) security camera footage.

Australis cannot, and will not purport to, undertake a criminal investigation. However, reporting an incident to the police does not preclude Australis from dealing with the matter under the Australis SASH-PM Framework and this policy and procedures. Australis will ensure that its investigation of reports of sexual assault and/or sexual harassment provide:

- clear authority for any investigation
- a clear description of the nature of any investigation
- a clear description of the matters which may be investigated
- clear guidance to staff on the steps involved in any investigation
- a clear description of the skills and qualifications required of those who investigate, and make decisions about, reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment
- for appropriate confidentiality in the investigation, and for a clear description of the way in which information will be used and disclosed
- for those responsible for any investigation to receive appropriate training.

Australis's process to consider a report of sexual assault or sexual harassment should be procedurally fair. In particular, it should:

- provide those accused of sexual assault or sexual harassment with a reasonable opportunity to respond to the accusation and the evidence on which it is based
- provide an opportunity for those being interviewed (including those accused of
  - sexual assault or sexual harassment) to bring a support person to the interview, with clear information about how and where to obtain support
  - provide for clear rights of review of any decision about the accusation, including a description of any internal review mechanisms available
  - ensure that those involved in any response to a report are free from bias.

Following the investigation, the alleged perpetrator and the person who experienced the sexual assault or sexual harassment will be advised of the outcome of the investigation in a timely manner. In some cases, for privacy reasons, the details of the penalty or outcome cannot be provided. However, in all cases, students and staff who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment and alleged perpetrators should be advised that the issue has been resolved and be given as much information about the outcome as possible, especially in respect of any impacts that it may have on their ongoing safety and wellbeing. Where the investigation leads to a finding of misconduct, the alleged perpetrator will be given a clear description of the reasons for the finding, as well as an opportunity to make representations about any penalty or sanction.

### 3.1.5 Record keeping

In developing good record keeping practices, Australis has referenced the Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector July 2020 (source: [https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf)).

Australis will record information on reports or disclosures of sexual assault or sexual harassment, regardless of whether it is a disclosure or formal report, in a single, centrally-located and secure manner. Where possible, the details of the alleged perpetrator and any disciplinary action taken will be recorded. A robust and confidential record management system will include incidents reported to security, health and counselling services and through online forms and emails. Reporting timeframes including responses will also be recorded.

When a disclosure or report is received, Australis will routinely check its records for whether either or both parties have been involved in previously-reported incidents. This is to identify behaviour patterns, victimisation, and vexatious claims, and to ensure that multiple incidents between the same parties are taken into consideration. If previous incidents are found, they should be considered as part of any decision on whether to investigate and whether to report to police, and as part of any decision about a penalty/sanction if misconduct has occurred. They should, however, not be provided to the internal investigator to avoid bias. Australis will let students and staff know how their information will be recorded and stored, who will have access to this information, and how this data will be used. The number of people with access to this sensitive data should be as small as practicable.

The SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce are responsible for reviewing and reporting data and critical incidents to the Australis Board of Directors on a regular basis, for further details refer to appendix 1 – SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce Terms of Reference.

The SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce report should provide the Board of Directors with a thorough understanding of Australis's risks and the way in which Australis is preventing, identifying, and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment. When reviewing the data, the Board of Directors should also pay attention to the number of anonymous or third party reports, and consider the likely level of underreporting.

Reporting of high-level data and information on the Australis website reflects Australis's accountability and transparency. Data that will be published will be de-identified and include not only the number of incidents that have been reported, but also the action taken by Australis, wherever possible. This is one way in which members of the community will know that Australis responds to incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment, and that these incidents are brought to light.

### 3.1.6 Vexatious complaint

A vexatious complaint is one that is falsely made; that is, it is not made in good faith or based on evidence. Evidence shows that sexual assault is no more falsely reported than any other crime. Sometimes a claim will be made honestly, based on a real perception of negative treatment, but for various reasons the evidence will not support the complaint. In some cases, the complaint is made to bring annoyance or distress.

Australis will deal with incident reporting and/or complaints, including those that are related to allegations of sexual assault and/or sexual harassment, in good faith and allegations and/or complaints that are frivolous, vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance will be rejected if a preliminary investigation of the facts indicates this.

## 3.2 Continuous improvement

Australis will ensure that its prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment is monitored and evaluated which leads to process improvements. Australis aims to deliver a system that will prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment effectively. Australis acknowledges that there is always room for improvement and Australis will foster the creation of open and thoughtful monitoring and review processes.

The Australis SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce play an important role in ongoing improvement and also provide a measure of progress. Specifically, the SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce have continuous improvement in their terms of reference (refer to appendix 1 for details), including:

*“Monitor, review and evaluate Australis’s prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment and lead process improvements to the way Australis prevents and responds to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Develop and monitor actions plans designed to address issues as part of its ongoing role in this monitoring and review process.”*

### 3.2.1 Monitoring and analysis

The Australis SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce will monitor and analyse the incident data (in a form that protects the confidentiality of the individuals involved), and regularly report to the Board of Directors, including recommendations regarding risk. Data can be disaggregated by year, and by whether the incident occurred on/off campus or on public transport. Regularly reporting data on the management of sexual assault and sexual harassment ensures that Australis remains focussed on its obligations and responsibilities to respond to it.

Information about repeat offenders and high risk activities or locations will be identified. Australis will work with other providers, police or local services (e.g. counselling services, sexual assault services, etc.) to verify the information they hold.

The Australis SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce will report to the Board of Directors on the progress of its implementation of actions. Action plans should include reportable indicators for this purpose. The Australis SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce will also report risks and emerging issues.

### 3.2.2 Evaluation and improvement

The Board of Directors or Chief Executive Officer may commission expert-led external reviews of the efficacy of this policy and procedures at regular time intervals. External reviews should be conducted with clear aims and scope provided to the reviewer. The reviewer should be an expert in the area to be reviewed and ideally external and independent to the provider.

Australis will put in place the following three areas that would benefit from regular reviews and has outlined the frequency of each review:

- The policies and procedures involved in the prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment should be reviewed regularly for alignment, efficacy and current best practice, outside the normal policy review cycle.
  - Frequency of this type of review: at least every three years.
- An independent, expert-led review of counselling services should be undertaken and an action plan based on the recommendations developed. This review will be considered by the Australis SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce and the Board of Directors
  - Frequency of this type of review: at least every three years.
- Australis and relevant student accommodation providers will work together to undertake regular independent, expert-led reviews of the policies and procedures designed to identify, prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment in student accommodation.
  - Frequency of this type of review: at least every three years.

The resulting action plan should address the findings of the review(s) and instigate measurable improvements in a given timeframe. The next review should ensure that the action plan has been executed and suggest further improvements. All reviews and action plans will be published and publicly available via Australis's website.

Australis is committed to continuous improvement based on innovation, evaluation and learning should be stipulated in Australis's relevant policies, procedures and guidelines.

In the case of training, education and information initiatives, Australis will gain participants' feedback annually, to ensure ongoing relevance to the intended audience and to monitor the need for improvement. Each initiative should be evaluated for its efficiency and effectiveness. In its commitment to continuous improvement, Australis will also seek to collaborate and to exchange innovative approaches with others in the higher education sector.

## Appendix 1 – SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce Terms of Reference

### Overview

The SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce report to the Board of Directors and are responsible for the ongoing implementation and improvement of measures to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment. The Australis SASH prevention and response taskforce will bring people with different perspectives to work together on this challenge. The taskforce is required to meet on a regular and ongoing basis, and will be invested with the power and resources to create change.

### Functions, responsibilities and reporting requirements

The taskforce undertakes the following functions and responsibilities.

- Prepare SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce reports that are presented to the Australis Board of Directors on:
  - The progress of the implementation of measures to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment
  - Actions taken on reports and outcomes
  - Key developments in training and education
  - Emerging issues
  - Relevant data, including numbers and nature of reported sexual assault and sexual harassment incidents and proposed changes to prevention and response measures.
  - What data or information is published on the Australis website
- Monitor, review and evaluate Australis's prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment and lead process improvements to the way Australis prevents and responds to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Develop and monitor actions plans designed to address issues as part of its ongoing role in this monitoring and review process.
- Review this policy and procedure at least every three (3) years from the date of final approval.
- The Board of Directors or Chief Executive Officer may commission independent expert-led reviews of the efficacy of this policy and procedures at regular time intervals. This is to ensure that policies and procedures continue to be implemented accurately, and to correct for drift resulting from policy and procedure updates over the years. Where deficiencies are identified as a result of the review, an action plan will be created and implemented with involvement from this taskforce.
- Participate in externally led expert reviews on an as-required basis on:
  - Policies and procedures involved in the prevention of and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment for alignment, efficacy and current best practice, outside the normal policy review cycle.

- Counselling services with an action plan developed based on the recommendations.
- Relevant student accommodation providers of the policies and procedures designed to identify, prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment in student accommodation.
- Lead continuous improvement, including collaboration and exchange innovative approaches with others in the higher education sector.
- Record minutes of meetings that will be submitted for consideration to the BoD.
- Retain minutes of meetings in Australis's primary electronic management system for use in internal and regulatory reporting.

## Composition, membership and training

Membership of the taskforce is reviewed at least every two (2) years by the BoD. The term served by student members may vary depending upon their year of enrolment when invited to serve. Student members are identified by the Dean and Chief Executive Officer and recommended to the BoD for approval.

To highlight the emphasis and high priority Australis place on SASH prevention and response, this taskforce will include Australis's most senior leaders, as shown in the table below. Australis will include research expertise and academic knowledge of Australis academic staff in the taskforce.

The membership of the SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce includes:

Position	Role	Name
Chair	Chief Executive Officer	Dr Michelle Lac
Member	Dean (academic staff)	Associate Professor Susan Lambert
Member	Course Co-ordinator (academic staff)	Associate Professor Seedwell Sithole
Member	Student Representative	To be advised
Member	Administration and HR Manager	To be advised
Member	Student Administration and Support Officer	To be advised

This taskforce should have broad representation from both within and outside of Australis. At a minimum, the group will include students, academic staff, and administrative staff. The taskforce aims to have diversity amongst its members. This might include the representation

of groups such as LGBTIQ+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people with disabilities.

All members would be offered relevant training, support and access to counselling in case they experience distress.

## **Meetings**

The Taskforce meets at least three (3) times per year. The Chair may convene a special meeting at any time with reasonable notice. The Taskforce may meet using technology such as teleconferencing/videoconferencing.

## **The Chair**

The Taskforce is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer. If at any meeting the appointed Chair is not present, the members may choose another member to be Chair of the meeting and the substitute Chair has all powers, discretions and functions at such meeting that would be exercisable by or conferred on the Chair had they been present.

## **Secretariat**

The Secretary is appointed by the Chair and is responsible for secretariat support. Papers will normally be available at least three (3) days in advance of a meeting. Draft minutes will normally be available within seven (7) days of a given meeting. Unconfirmed minutes will be distributed to members thereafter for approval at the next meeting

## **Quorum and Voting**

A quorum of the Taskforce for any meeting will consist of one half of the appointed members if the number of members is even or a majority of the appointed members if the number of members is odd. In the case of a tied vote, the Chair has the casting vote.

Matters requiring approval by the Taskforce will ordinarily be resolved on a consensus basis. However, if this cannot be achieved, then the respective matter will be decided by a vote of members. Decisions will be in accordance with the vote of the majority.

The method of voting shall be by voices or, at the discretion of the Chair or on the request of any two (2) members, by a show of hands. In the absence of a majority, the Chair will have the casting vote.

## **Evaluation and Review of Terms of Reference**

The taskforce will annually evaluate its performance and these terms of reference. Amendments to these terms of reference must be approved by a majority of the total membership and presented to the Board of Directors for approval.

## **Appendix 2 – Guidance on staff and student personal relationships**



The following guidelines have been adapted from the Monash University Staff/Student Personal Relationship Procedure.

Australis provides the following guidance to all Australis staff during staff induction.

All Australis staff should avoid the following:

- one-on-one meetings with a student about Australis matters at a private residence or secluded place;
- engaging in consensual conduct of a sexual nature with a student whom you are teaching, assessing or supervising;
- having a personal relationship with a student whom you are teaching, assessing or supervising;
- engaging in exploitative dealings with a student or using your position relative to a student for some personal advantage;
- discussing details of your own intimate and sensitive personal matters with a student, such as your sexual relationship, mental health or financial position;
- borrowing or accepting money or other gifts from a student or otherwise having a financial interest with a student, except for token gifts after all assessment is completed;
- behaviour of a threatening or criminal nature, or which reasonably makes the student feel unsafe, including stalking, repeated attempts to impose unwanted communication or contact that is not the appropriate performance of your Australis duties, harassment, assault, sexual assault or bullying;
- engaging in any other conduct towards a student which is unreasonable and unwelcome, and could reasonably be expected to make the student feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Source: Monash University. Staff/Student Personal Relationship Procedure, <https://publicpolicydms.monash.edu/Monash/documents/1935732>

## Appendix 3 – Summary Checklist

The following checklist will be used as a tool for Australis to cross check that its implementation of this policy and procedure address the actions in Appendix B: Summary Checklist from the Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector July 2020 (source: [https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf)).

### Action

#### 1. Wellbeing and safety of the students and staff members who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment are the focus of SASH prevention and response

Aim to minimise the trauma that reporting can cause.

Both students and staff members who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment and alleged perpetrators are supported and kept informed of progress and outcome of the process in a timely manner.

Provide an environment in which students and staff feel safe and community members are trained to receive disclosures and respond appropriately.

#### 2. Leadership and governance ensure institution wide action

A sexual assault and sexual harassment taskforce/working group or responsible role has been established, and reports regularly to the governing body.

Students are members of the working group.

Providers collaborate with student accommodation services.

The governing body ensures sexual assault and sexual harassment policies, processes and activities have been established.

#### 3. SASH policies are in place and inclusive

Policies and procedures to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment include definitions, descriptions, consequences, how and where to report and where to seek internal and external support. Also covered is the implementation of monitoring and moderating of the online environment, including provider affiliated social media sites, for technologically facilitated sexual harassment. All policies are written in inclusive language and align with each other.

Policies and procedures around alcohol consumption and hazing are in place at student accommodations and training of club and team members (bystander, first responder) to raise awareness of risk of sexual assault and sexual harassment in social gatherings combined with alcohol or during fieldtrip and sporting events is conducted regularly.

#### 4. A safe environment is provided for all staff and students

To the best of the education provider's ability, a safe environment in the student accommodations is promoted and fostered, ensuring liaison between accommodation and education providers in supporting students who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment, minimising impact and resolving issue effectively and efficiently.

Security guards or trained staff are provided whenever students are on campus, security escort if necessary. Consideration of provision of security app free of charge and minimisation of environmental factors that pose a risk to student safety. A safe environment is provided.

#### 5. Comprehensive education and information materials are widely available and regularly updated

Ensure information and material aiming to raise awareness is provided in a variety of conspicuous online and off line locations, available and updated with interesting and relevant initiatives throughout the year. Ensure contractors and others unable to log into provider online environment have access to this information as well.

Provide and update internal and external contact details for relevant support services, ensuring differing access options and diversity of groups reached.

#### 6. Staff and students are trained to confidently recognise, prevent and respond to SASH

Provision of training (online and face-to-face) on positive relationships/consent, active bystanding and first responder training as a minimum, by trained facilitators, delivered in inclusive language and translated into languages most pertinent for the current student cohort throughout the year.

All training courses should be evaluated for impact and adapted according to the findings.

Resident students and staff are trained in active bystanding, first responding, consent and the implementation of the policies and procedures relevant to sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response.

#### 7. Support is accessible and timely for all parties involved

Ensure access to adequately trained counselling staff (can be external services), including after hours, ensuring the needs of all groups in the student cohort are catered for.

Special considerations are available to assist survivors of sexual assault and sexual harassment with their academic workload.

Students and staff members who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment and alleged perpetrators are supported throughout and following the reporting process regardless of the type of report (disclosure, internal or external formal report) free of charge.

Establish collaborative relationships with police and local sexual assault and sexual harassment support services.

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Do you have access to a restorative justice or conciliation option?

#### 8. Incident reporting and the provider's response are well thought out and fit for purpose

Policies and procedures clearly outline the reporting options and response procedures. Policies and procedures regulating the provider's response to reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment are accessible, fair, easy to understand and cover misconduct of members of the provider's community against each other.

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Options exist to report anonymously or about a third party. Students and staff members who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment can choose the type of reporting, if any, and their level of involvement in the process.

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Liaise with the police in the case of criminal investigations to ensure both criminal investigation and provider's administrative process can proceed without jeopardising either.

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Incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment are recorded as such in a central register, including the provider's response and the outcome of the response procedure. Summarised incident data are reported regularly to the provider's governing body and current measures of prevention and response are assessed and, if required, adjusted.

#### 9. Ongoing innovation, evaluation and improvement of SASH prevention and response measures

Independent, expert led reviews of the efficiency of sexual assault and sexual harassment-related policies, provision of counselling services and, if applicable, provisions of student wellbeing in student accommodation services, are conducted regularly, action plans established and implemented to ensure ongoing improvement of the measures in place.

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Training course (online and face-to-face) are regularly evaluated for impact and efficacy and modified according to the outcomes of the evaluation analysis.

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Providers exchange and share experiences and resources with each other to ensure ongoing improvement of their ability to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

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## Appendix 4 – Australis Points of Contact

The table below provides the points of contact for incidents that may relate to sexual assault and/or sexual harassment. They are also members of the Australis SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce.

All reports, whether formal, informal or anonymous should be made to any of the contacts provided in the table below.

Phone: +61 9863 7322

Further information is also provided on the Australis public website:

[www.Australis.net.au](http://www.Australis.net.au)

Contact	Role	Name
slambert@Australis.net.au	Dean (academic staff)	Associate Professor Susan Lambert
ssithole@Australis.net.au	Course Co-ordinator (academic staff)	Associate Professor Seedwell Sithole
To be advised	Administration and HR Manager	To be advised
To be advised	Student Administration and Support Officer	To be advised

## Appendix 5 – Support and advice available to students and staff

Australis provides information for addressing allegations of sexual harassment or sexual assault and provides students and staff with have access to support and advice about, including their options to address allegations of sexual harassment and/or sexual assault.

The immediate and ongoing wellbeing of our students and staff is Australis's highest priority. Regardless of whether students or staff choose to make a formal report or not, Australis offers the following free and confidential services to students and staff. Some of these services are offered by Australis and some are offered by external providers.

Australis offers support through the:

- SASH Prevention and Response Taskforce
- Academic Support

See appendix 4 – Australis Points of Contact and contact details.

### External Support Available:

#### Melbourne Sexual Health Centre

03 9341 6200

<https://www.mshc.org.au/>

#### St Vincent's Hospital:

(03) 9231 2211

Emergency Department Open 24 Hours

41 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy VIC 3065

<https://www.svhm.org.au/>

#### The Royal Melbourne Hospital:

(03) 9342 7000

Emergency Department Open 24 Hours

300 Grattan St, Parkville VIC 3050

<https://www.thermh.org.au/>

**1800RESPECT**

Helpline 24/7

Ph: 1800 737 732

“Confidential information, counselling and support service”

<https://www.1800respect.org.au/>

**Victoria Police**

<https://www.police.vic.gov.au/>

Dial Triple Zero (000) for police, ambulance and fire

Non-urgent reports- Call 131 444 or submit an online report 24/7

**Victims of Crime Helpline**

Ph: 1800 819 817

“Whatever the incident, being a victim of crime can be a frightening experience with many short-and long-term consequences. If you are a victim of a crime and would like to speak to someone, please call 1800 819 817 (free call). ”

<https://www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au/>

**Sexual Assault Crisis Line**

“A free, statewide, after-hours service for people in Victoria who have experienced sexual violence. The crisis line operates from 5 pm on weeknights to 9 am the next day, and during the same hours on weekends and public holidays.”

Phone: 1800 806 292

<https://www.sacl.com.au/>

**Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASA)**

“The peak body for the 15 Centres Against Sexual Assault in Victoria and the Victorian Sexual Assault Crisis Line. Call their toll-free number to be connected with the nearest centre or for after-hours support.”

Phone: 1800 806 292

<https://casa.org.au/>

**Lifeline Telephone Counselling**

24 Hrs Crisis Support Line

Ph: 131 114

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/131114/>

**Beyond Blue**

Crisis Counselling Service

Ph: (03) 98106100

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/about-us/contact-us>

**ReachOut.com**

“Everything you need to know about  
sexual assault”

<https://au.reachout.com/articles/sexual-assault>

**The Royal Women’s Hospital Sexual Assault Service**

Sexual Assault Crisis Line on 1800 806 292

**Women’s Legal Service Victoria**

1800 133 302

<https://www.womenslegal.org.au/>



## Appendix 6 - Consent Matters: Boundaries, Respect, and Positive Intervention Training provided to all Australis staff and students

**Deliver current, inclusive, and scalable training to students institution-wide**

Developed with an expert panel of advisors, authors, and student and staff reviewers, the latest edition of the award-winning Consent Matters course provides current, interactive, evidence-based, accessible and inclusive training on sexual consent, communication, relationships, and bystander intervention:

- Deliver up-to-date training institution-wide, drawing on the latest developments in Australian culture and law, and global, research-based best practices
- Engage students with a wide range of interactive, multimedia activities, helping to develop good communication, clear boundaries and mutual respect in relationships, and exploring ways to step in when witnessing a problematic situation
- Ensure an inclusive approach with realistic scenarios and peer perspectives that represent the experiences of diverse student communities
- Benefit from a fully flexible online resource that enables efficient and cost-effective scaling up of training, and can be integrated into a blended learning approach to complement face-to-face workshops

**Course structure:**

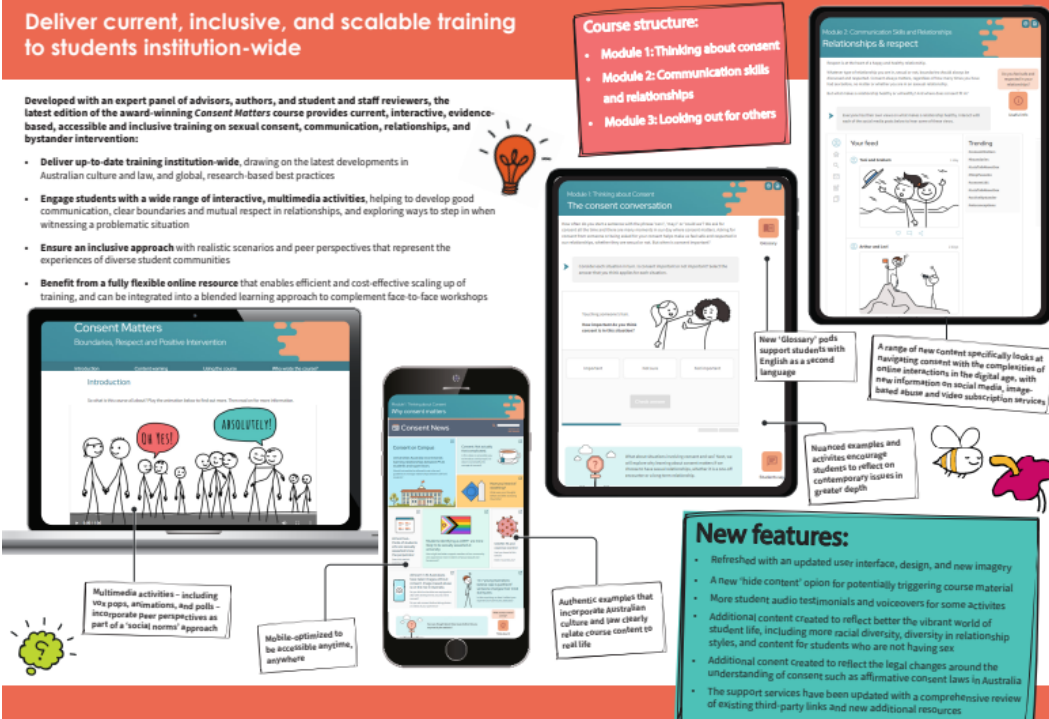
- Module 1: Thinking about consent
- Module 2: Communication skills and relationships
- Module 3: Looking out for others

**New features:**

- Refreshed with an updated user interface, design, and new imagery
- A new 'hide content' option for potentially triggering course material
- More student audio testimonials and voiceovers for some activities
- Additional content created to reflect better the vibrant world of student life, including more racial diversity, diversity in relationship styles, and content for students who are not having sex
- Additional content created to reflect the legal changes around the understanding of consent such as affirmative consent laws in Australia
- The support services have been updated with a comprehensive review of existing third party links and new additional resources

**Other features:**

- Multimedia activities - including video, audio, animations, and polls - incorporate peer perspectives as part of a 'social norms' approach
- Mobile-optimized to be accessible anytime, anywhere
- Authentic examples that incorporate Australian culture and law clearly relate course content to real life
- New 'Glossary' guide support students with English as a second language
- A range of new content specifically links at navigating consent with the complexities of the digital age, with new information on social media, image-based abuse and video subscription services
- Nuanced examples and activities encourage students to reflect on contemporary issues in greater depth



**epigeum** Support and Wellbeing

### Meet our Author Team

**Lead Advisor and Author**

**Dr. Alan Berkowitz**  
An award-winning independent consultant and expert with over twenty-five years of experience, Dr. Berkowitz specialises in culture change, gender issues, ending men's violence, and fostering social justice.

**Authors**

**Sue Webeck**  
Manager of the Respectful Relationships Unit at Australia National University.

**Zoe Harrison**  
Social Worker at Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault service.




Get in touch with our Academic Partnerships team to find out more about Consent Matters and how our Support and Wellbeing programmes can work together to meet your institution's needs.

Find out more: [www.epigeum.com/courses/support-wellbeing/consent-matters-second-edition/](http://www.epigeum.com/courses/support-wellbeing/consent-matters-second-edition/)  
Request more information or a free trial: [epigeum@sagepub.com](mailto:epigeum@sagepub.com)


Follow us: @Epigeum | Follow us: Epigeum



Source: <https://www.epigeum.com/custom/uploads/2023/08/Updated-CM-2.1-Flyer-ANZ.pdf>



## Consent Matters: Boundaries, Respect and Positive Intervention Update

Support and Wellbeing 

Using feedback and reviews from our learners and advisors, *Consent Matters: Boundaries, Respect, and Positive Intervention* has been updated to ensure that it continues to provide current, accessible, and inclusive training on consent, communication, relationships, and bystander intervention.

**Updated Design**

The programme has been refreshed with an updated user interface and design, including new imagery.

**Student Audio**

We've added more student audio testimonials and voiceover for some activities.

**Diversity & Inclusion**

Additional content has been created to reflect better the vibrant world of student life, including more racial diversity, diversity in relationship styles (e.g. polyamorous), and content for students who are not having sex. We've also included even more real-life perspectives and personal stories.

**A Safe Space to Learn**

Learners will have the power to control what they see, ensuring a safe space to learn with our new 'hide content' option for potentially triggering course material.

**The Digital Age**


A range of new content specifically looks at navigating consent with the complexities of online interactions in the digital age.

**Legal Changes**

Additional content has been created to reflect the legal changes around the understanding of consent.

**Support Services**

The support services have been updated with a comprehensive review of existing third-party links and new additional resources.



Source: <https://www.epigeum.com/custom/uploads/2023/07/CM-2.1-Update-Flyer-1.pdf>

## 5. Related Documents, External References and Version Control

### 5.1 Related/Referenced Documents

- Privacy Policy
- Staff Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Student Handbook
- Health and Safety Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
- Governance Charter and Delegations Framework
- Assessment Policy and Procedure
- Student Welfare, Wellbeing and Support Policy and Procedure.

### 5.2 Related Legislation and External References

- Higher Education Standards Framework 2021
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2021
- Guidance Note: Wellbeing and Safety (<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/guidance-notes/guidance-note-wellbeing-and-safety>)
- Good Practice Note: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector ([https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual\\_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/good-practice-note-preventing-responding-sexual-assault-sexual_harassment-v2-0-web.pdf))
- Guidelines for University responses to sexual assault and sexual harassment (<https://universitiesaustralia.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/UA-Guidelines-2.pdf>)
- Griffith College Sexual Assault, Harassment, Discrimination, Victimisation and Bullying Policy (<https://www.griffithcollege.edu.au/content/dam/navitas/upa/griffith/pdfs/sexual-assault-harassment-discrimination-victimisation-bullying-policy-gc.pdf>)
- Monash University Staff/Student Personal Relationships Procedure (<https://publicpolicydms.monash.edu/Monash/documents/1935732>)
- Melbourne University Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy (<https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1359/>)
- Our Watch: Resource links

### 5.3 Version Control

Version	Date	Reviewed/approved by	Key notes/changes

0.1	19/3/24	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Drafted by CEO with input from Academic Board (AB) members and Board of Directors (BoD)
0.2	4/4/24	Academic Board (AB)	Feedback from the 4/4/24 AB meeting incorporated
0.3	5/4/24	Board of Directors (BoD)	Feedback from the 5/4/24 BoD meeting incorporated
0.4	11/4/22	AB and BoD	Reviewed and approved at the AB 11/04/24 meeting Reviewed and approved at the BoD 11/04/24 meeting

## 5.4 Document Review

To be reviewed at least every three (3) years from the date of final approval. The Board of Directors or Chief Executive Officer may commission independent expert-led reviews of the efficacy of this policy and procedures at regular time intervals. This is to ensure that policies and procedures continue to be implemented accurately, and to correct for drift resulting from policy and procedure updates over the years. Where deficiencies are identified as a result of a review, an action plan will be created and implemented. This will be done in consultation with the Australis SASH prevention and response taskforce.