



Australian  
National  
University

# 2024 Sexual Misconduct Annual Report

**Student reports and disclosures**

April 2025

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# Acknowledgements

ANU thanks students who trusted us with disclosures and reports of their experiences of sexual misconduct and we acknowledge all victim-survivors in our community. We are grateful for the voices of many student advocates and their commitment to supporting the University make our campus safe and welcoming place to live and learn.

This report contains information about disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment and reports of sexual misconduct, which may be distressing for some members of our community.

If you need support, please refer to the services below:

## **For ANU students**

- Student Safety and Wellbeing - [student.wellbeing@anu.edu.au](mailto:student.wellbeing@anu.edu.au)

## **For ANU staff**

- Adviser to Staff (confidential, professional counselling) - [staff.adviser@anu.edu.au](mailto:staff.adviser@anu.edu.au)
- Staff Respect Consultant - [staffrespect@anu.edu.au](mailto:staffrespect@anu.edu.au)
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) [services.anu.edu.au/human-resources/wellbeing](https://services.anu.edu.au/human-resources/wellbeing)

## **In the community**

- 1800 Respect (1800 737 732)
- For immediate safety needs, please call emergency services on **000**

Information on other support services can be found at:

- [Getting help at ANU -sexual harassment and sexual assault response](#)
- [Getting help at ANU -urgent support](#)

# Glossary of Terms

**Balance of probabilities:**

The civil standard of proof, which requires that, on balance of information, it is more probable than not that the allegation is substantiated.

**Case management:**

A collaborative process that assesses, plans, implements, coordinates, monitors and evaluates the options and services required to meet a student's safety, wellbeing and academic needs. Case management is provided through the ANU Student Safety and Wellbeing team.

**Complainant:**

A person(s) who makes a report under University Policy and/or Discipline Rule.

**Decision maker:**

Under the Rule, the decision maker is an approved delegate of the Vice-Chancellor.

**Disclosure:**

Information provided about an incident that the person making the disclosure believes to be sexual assault and/or sexual harassment. The University encourages (although does not require) this to occur via lodging an online disclosure form. A disclosure is not a formal complaint or report, can be anonymous, and the person disclosing is able to, but does not have to, identify the other person/people involved. Lodging a disclosure does not prevent someone from looking at their reporting options both within the University and directly to the police and may be a precursor to doing so. The University makes a clear distinction between making a disclosure and making a report.

**DVC (A):**

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

**Enrolment conditions:**

An action available to a Prescribed Authority (r34(2)(e)) and Vice-Chancellor (or their delegate) (r37(2)(e)), under the Discipline Rule 2021, following a finding of misconduct to 'determine the conditions under which the respondent may attend classes or lessons, use any facility of the University, or otherwise continue with the respondent's studies or research program'.

**Exclusion:**

A University initiated termination of a student's program or career. Definition under the Discipline Rule:

An action available to the Vice Chancellor (or their delegate) under the Discipline Rule 2021 following a finding of misconduct (r37(2)(j)). Rule 45(2) of the Discipline Rule 2021 provides that, where a person is excluded from the University under the instrument:

45(2) The person ceases to be a student and, except with the written permission of the Vice-Chancellor:

- (a) must not be enrolled again; and
- (b) must not use any University facility, or enter any University premises or the part of any University premises, that the Vice-Chancellor, by written notice given to the person, prohibits the person from using or entering; and
- (c) must not engage in any activities conducted by or on behalf of the University at the University or at a place other than the University.

**First responder:**

A person who is the first to become aware (or is confided in by another) that a person has experienced or is currently experiencing an incident/s of alleged sexual harassment or sexual assault.

**Report:**

An official complaint and a documented formal process. Reporting to the University triggers a review into the allegation and a decision as to whether to proceed with an inquiry under a particular University policy or the Discipline Rule 2021. A report under the Discipline Rule is made to the Conduct and Integrity team (formerly Office of the Registrar). The University makes a clear distinction between making a disclosure and making a report.

**Reprimand:**

An action available to a Prescribed Authority (r34(2)(b)) and Vice-Chancellor (or their delegate) (r37(2)(b)), under the Discipline Rule 2021, following a finding of misconduct to give formal expression of disapproval for behaviour as found.

**Respondent:**

A person(s) against whom a report has been made under a University policy or the Discipline Rule.

**Safe-making:**

Refers to actions that can be taken to improve the safety of a person living with, or at risk of, violence and/or abuse.

**SVPS:**

Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy

**Sexual misconduct:**

Instances of sexual harassment or sexual assault that the University is notified of or is responding to. Note that this term is defined in the Sexual Misconduct Policy as follows: Sexual misconduct is a term encompassing any unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature including sexual assault, sexual harassment, an act of indecency, making or distributing sexually explicit photos or videos without consent, and any other non-consensual sexual conduct if a reasonable person would consider that conduct to be an invasion of their privacy, indecent or otherwise unacceptable conduct.

**Undertaking:**

A promise about future action made by the respondent once a finding of misconduct has been made under the Discipline Rule 2021. Accepting an undertaking from the respondent is a permissible penalty to impose on a respondent under the Rule.

**Victim/survivor:**

The person who experienced the sexual assault and/or sexual harassment incident(s).

# Background

The health, safety and wellbeing of our staff and students are at the forefront of our work. As part of our commitment to our community under the Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy 2019-2026 (SVPS) and the Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2024-2026, the University has released a Sexual Misconduct Reports and Disclosures report since 2022. The report reflects our continued commitment to ensuring our study and work environments are safe, respectful, and inclusive places.

The University continues to adopt a trauma-informed and victim-centred approach to its policies and procedures related to the prevention, monitoring and reporting of sexual misconduct and remains committed to being transparent in our efforts to prevent and respond to incidents of sexual misconduct that impact the University community.

## University-wide actions undertaken since the last report

- Regularly updated the Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee of Council on harmful behaviours disclosed to ANU (through the Harmful Behaviours tool and incident reporting to the Residential Experience Division).
- Developed a new Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan. The Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2024-2026 is available at [Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan](#) and expands on the activities from the first Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2022-2023.
- Implemented the endorsed Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy (SVPS) review recommendations - the implementation of the [SVPS review report](#) completed by UNSW's Gendered Violence Research Network has been embedded under Stream 2 of the Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2024-2026. A number of recommendations have been actioned including:
  - » Applying an intersecting and diverse student experience: This has been addressed through the expansion of Bystander Training to include its applicability to a wider range of harmful behaviours.
  - » Increasing the role of Peer Educators in the development and delivery of prevention and education activities: the Inclusive and Respectful Communities team employed 16 Peer Educators in 2024 to lead a number of activities including the development of anti-racism posters and materials.

- » Launched an expanded disclosure tool to support disclosures of other harmful behaviours including racism, ableism, and other forms of discrimination. The expanded disclosure tool was released in February 2024 after consultation with staff and students, allowing the University to gather information on a broader range of harmful behaviours impacting the community. The expansion also allows staff to lodge disclosures which are responded to by the Staff Respect Consultant within People and Culture.
- Released the Rights, Relationships and Respect in Research (R4) online module for Higher Degree Research candidates and supervisors. The module was launched in May 2024 with 468 students and HDR supervisors enrolling in 2024. This module is part of the suite of online training available to the University community. The Rights, Relationships and Respect (coursework) module was launched in 2023 and by the end of 2024, 10,919 students had completed the module.
- Released the [Rights, Relationship and Respect 2023 evaluation report](#) –conducted by POLIS –the Centre for Social Policy Research with support from the Inclusive and Respectful Communities team. Key survey results from 1,284 respondents indicate:
  - » 89% completed the module due to its perceived importance.
  - » 85% rated it as clear and valuable, with positive feedback from female, postgraduate, and international students.
  - » Students expressed trust in ANU support services, especially among male and international students.
  - » Learning activities revealed strong student understanding of sexual misconduct policies, consent, and bystander action.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>i</sup> [Robertson, H., Rossner, M., and Gadow, R. \(2024\), Rights, Relationships, and Respect Evaluation: Final Report, POLIS: The Centre for Social Policy Research, The Australian National University.](#)

# Prevention activities in 2024

The Inclusive and Respectful Communities (IARC) team (which includes the former Respectful Relationships Unit) supports ANU communities to change the systems and cultures that drive sexual violence, fostering a safe and respectful campus.

A key remit of the IARC team is the primary prevention of harmful behaviours including gender-based violence. The team engages in proactive measures aimed at addressing the drivers of sexual violence and cultivating a culture of respect, safety, and consent on campus. This includes implementing comprehensive education and training programs for students, colleges, and staff covering topics like healthy relationships, consent, and bystander intervention.

In 2024, the team supported several local areas in leading their own cultural change projects to tackle the norms and behaviours that make sexual violence more likely to occur.

Key deliverables and achievements in 2024 include:

## Education and training

- Launched the second iteration of the Rights, Relationships and Respect (RRR) course work online program, redeveloped based on student feedback with a new standalone Bystander Intervention section added. In 2024, over 6000 students enrolled in the module.
- Released the Rights, Relationships and Respect in Research module aimed at HDR students and their supervisors, engaging 468 students and supervisors.
- Engaged over 650 students and staff in central training sessions (LGBTIQA+ Ally training and Understanding Sexual Violence and Bystander Intervention).
- Delivered face-to-face HDR candidate and supervisor training to 200 community members.
- Developed and delivered a pilot Healthy Masculinities workshop for ANU staff.
- Gained endorsement to develop a Rights, Relationships and Respect at Work online module for ANU staff, to be launched in mid-2025.

## Residential engagement

- Delivered Enlivening RRR face-to-face education to >1800 commencing residential students.
- Delivered four unique training programs totalling 18 sessions to Senior Residents/ Residential Mentors/ Residential Advisors with attendance for the programs >700
- Co-developed with students the initial learning content for an ongoing Bystander



Intervention online module targeted at empowering Senior Residents/ Residential Mentors/ Residential Advisors to facilitate complex conversations in their communities.

- Developed an anti-racism poster campaign highlighting the “Four I’s of Oppression” as a framework for understanding and combating racism on campus.

## Capacity-building and engagement

- Delivered bespoke training and consultations to over 900 staff and students.
  - » Programs include “Understanding and Responding to Harmful Behaviours”, “Intersectional Bystander Intervention”, “Building Inclusive Communities”, and more.
- Expanded the peer education program from having 6 to 17 Peer Educators.
- Co-designed and delivered training with peer educators for ~50 residential students preparing to facilitate Enlivening RRR in 2025.
- As part of its broader evaluation objectives, IARC is piloting a new way to engage with students through a series of “Student Activations” to better understand student perspectives on prevention initiatives and to establish effective feedback mechanisms. Using a participatory design approach, IARC delivered its first pilot at Graduate House at the end of 2024 engaging 15 HDR students.
- Targeted LGBTIQ+ Allyship for health and wellbeing providers within Student Health and Wellbeing.
- Targeted LGBTIQ+ Ally for 40 learning design staff supporting inclusion in the classroom.
- International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) community activity engaged ~ 70 students
- Wear it Purple event in collaboration with the Pinnacle Foundation ~ 50 attendees.

## Sharing our knowledge and practice

- Published final evaluation report for 2023 Rights, Relationships and Respect evaluation in collaboration with researchers at the Centre for Social Policy Research (POLIS), ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences.
- Published *Doing Consent Differently: A University Practitioners’ Reflection on Delivering Large-Scale Respect and Consent Education* in the *Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association*.
- Presented at the 2024 Student Success Conference on the Rights, Relationships and Respect Evaluation from 2023.
- Presented at the 2024 Safer Communities Symposium and ANZSSA Conference on the University’s holistic response approach and connecting prevention and response.

# Residential Experience Division

Through the Residential Experience Division (RED), ANU provides a network of on-campus accommodation support within the residences and across campus to prioritise student wellbeing for 6,500 students. Residential staff deliver trauma-informed and person-centred support, recognising the need to listen, believe and refer students to specialist services on and off campus.

In 2024, the ANU residences collaborated closely with the Inclusive and Respectful Communities (IARC) team to implement mandatory Enlivening RRR in-person workshops for new residents as a follow up to the mandatory completion of the online Rights, Respect and Relationships (RRR) module. Completion of the RRR module was closely monitored and sanctions such as probation, prevention from returning to residence the following year or holding leadership positions were imposed for those who did not complete.

Student leaders were trained in the ANU Harmful Behaviours Disclosure Tool, ANU Sexual Misconduct Policy and provided training to help them understand their role in prevention and safe referral pathways. Residences promoted clear reporting channels and worked with student advocacy groups within the residences to ensure improved understanding of these.

Residents were also offered to participate in bystander training as well as developing and running inclusive events with training facilitated by IARC's Peer Educators.

Recognising the intersectionality of harmful behaviours, RED's Academic Fellow developed a program to fight bigotry and racism on campus. It consisted of research and community programs to address structural, pedagogical and individual experiences of discrimination based on culture and race in higher education. The project was in response to data emerging at both local and (inter)national levels about the challenges experienced by students and staff from diverse backgrounds in university settings by investigating the experiences of students of colour in ANU residences.

## Continuous improvement

- A comprehensive After-Hours Model was implemented in July 2024 to address resident support, safety, and community wellbeing. The model seeks to strike a careful balance between professional staff oversight and student leadership. Central to this approach is the clear distinction between the roles of Community Support Officers (CSOs) and Residential Mentors (Student Leaders). CSOs are trained staff members who provide consistent, impartial, and professional support after hours, ensuring high-risk situations are managed effectively and confidentially. This reduces the burden on student leaders, allowing them to focus on building strong residential communities. In contrast, Residential Mentors play a vital role in fostering peer support and connection, helping to create a positive living environment where

students feel safe, included, and supported.

- The residential student leadership model was reviewed in 2024 with a renewed focus on student leaders building and fostering thriving social and academic communities.
- Residents are encouraged to complete the Residential Life Survey, with questions measuring safety and belonging on campus. RED senior managers use this information, in addition to incident data and feedback to address concerns as they arise.

## Pathways for support

The University prioritises the wellbeing and needs of individuals impacted by sexual harassment or sexual assault and provides two mechanisms to support students who have experienced gender-based violence.

### Disclosure

The purpose of a disclosure is to provide the victim/survivor with information and support, including details on formal reporting options within the University and to external parties such as the police. Disclosures can be identified or de-identified.

- **Identified disclosures** are responded to by the Student Safety and Wellbeing case management team, which provides tailored support, including implementing safety interventions, facilitating referrals to other services, and helping the student navigate academic special consideration.
- **De-identified disclosures** help the University understand the prevalence of sexual misconduct and identify areas requiring further education and training.

### Report

The **ANU Discipline Rule** ('the Rule') is a legislative instrument governing the University's formal process for investigating reports of student misconduct, including sexual misconduct. The Rule affords due process and allows the University to take appropriate action when misconduct findings are made.

To initiate this process, an impacted person must submit a formal report to the University. The reporting process is based on principles of procedural fairness, meaning that the respondent provided a fair opportunity to respond to the report.

# Disclosures of sexual misconduct

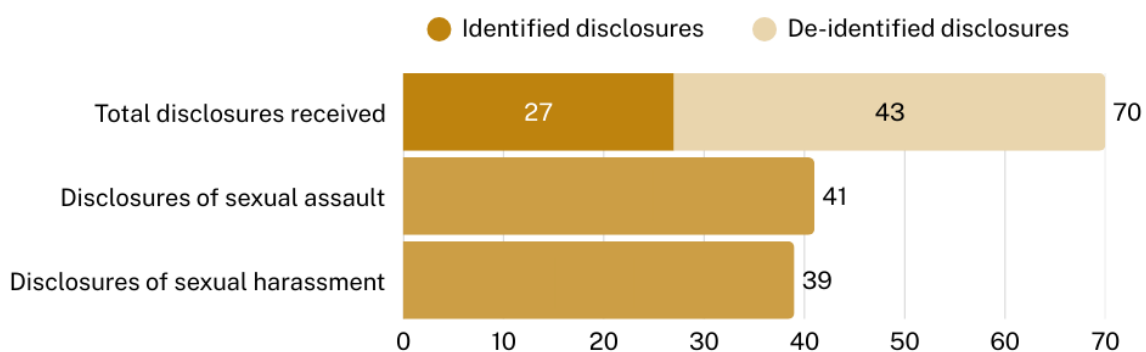
In February 2024, following feedback and consultation with students and staff, the University expanded its disclosure tool to enable the disclosure of other harmful behaviours including racism, ableism and other forms of discrimination. For students, all identified disclosures continue to be responded to by the Student Safety and Wellbeing team who use a trauma-informed and person-centred approach to support those who have experienced harm.

In 2024, the Student Safety and Wellbeing team received a total of 70 disclosures of sexual violence (Figure 1):

- » 27 disclosures were identified
- » 43 de-identified
- » 41 disclosures were of sexual assault\*
- » 39 of sexual harassment\*

\*Ten disclosures selected both sexual assault and sexual harassment

**Figure 1 - Behaviours disclosed through identified and de-identified pathways**



All the identified disclosures (27) were followed up by a Case Manager within 48 working hours of a disclosure being received to offer support and information.

It is important to remember that not all disclosures will result in a formal report with many students wanting other forms of support and information including:

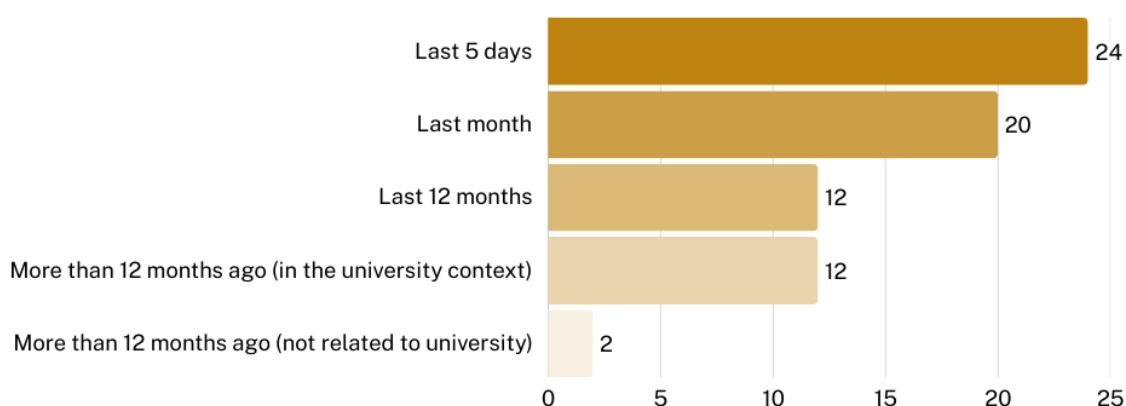
- Provision of supportive counselling.
- Understanding formal reporting mechanisms through the ANU, Police and Human Rights Commission
- Facilitation of referrals to support services including Counselling, Conduct and Integrity team, medical services, and external community services (Canberra Rape Crisis Centre, legal services etc).

- Coordination of academic support (extensions, exam deferrals and withdrawal without penalty) for students impacted.
- Navigating financial support through university pathways.
- Developing and implementing safety plans.

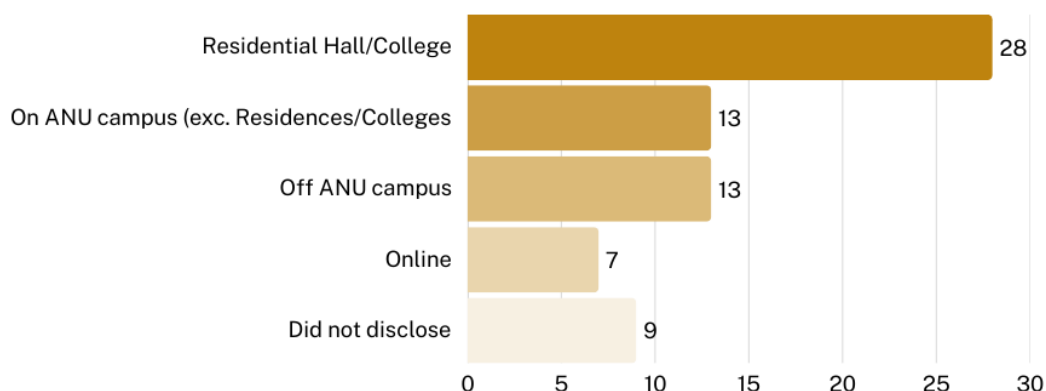
Case Managers also support the training of students in ANU residences to understand response pathways and support available.

The greatest proportion of disclosed harmful behaviour incidents happened less than five days prior to the disclosure (Figure 2). The highest proportion of reported harmful behaviour incidents happened within a residential hall or college (Figure 3).

**Figure 2 - The time period between the incident and disclosure.**



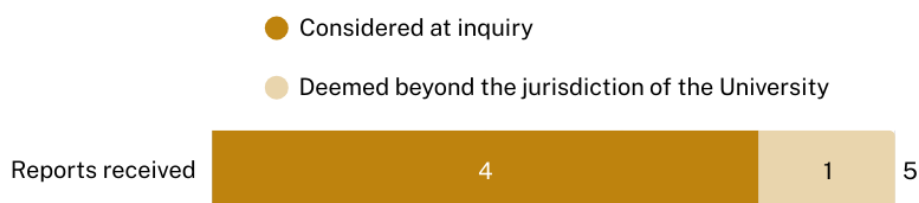
**Figure 3 - The locations where the disclosed incidents occurred.**



# Reports of sexual misconduct lodged under the ANU Discipline Rule

Data presented in this section were extracted from formal reports lodged with the Office of the Registrar in 2024 (1 January – 31 December). The Conduct and Integrity team supports nominated decision-makers under the Discipline Rule and is responsible for collecting this data. All relevant documentation is stored in accordance with the University’s obligations under the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

**Figure 4: Reports made to the Conduct and Integrity team of alleged sexual misconduct (2024)**



In 2024, 4 reports went on to inquiry (in relation to 4 individual respondents) of which:

- 3 respondents were found to have engaged in misconduct.
- 1 respondent was not found to have engaged in misconduct.

**Table 1: Penalties issued following a finding of misconduct in cases of reported sexual misconduct (2024)**

Exclusion	1
Denial of access	1
Conditions on continued enrolment (e.g. ongoing separation instruction, mandated training/remediation	2
Reprimand	3

\*Please note: each of the 3 respondents was issued more than one penalty as a result of the finding of misconduct.

The University aims to take swift action in relation to reports of sexual misconduct, including the application of immediate safe-making measures. Interim safe-making actions were arranged for all reports that proceeded to inquiry in 2024. Interim safe-making measures applied included separation instructions and/or a denial of the respondent’s access to university facilities, premises, or activities until the inquiry was finalised.

# ANU 2025 priorities for the prevention and response of harmful behaviours

The University will continue to work with the student and staff community and with support of the Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee of Council to further develop approaches to support community wellbeing, safety and inclusion. In 2025, we will be focusing on:

- Expanding peer led activities through the implementation of a residential student-led Enlivening RRR training program as well as expanding activities of IARC's Peer Educators.
- Developing and releasing a Rights, Relationships and Respect at Work online module for staff.
- Launching a targeted training program for staff, with identified schools, colleges and professional teams across ANU. In person training could include:
  - » Understanding gender-based violence
  - » Responding to disclosures of sexual violence
  - » Responding to students in distress
  - » Bystander intervention
  - » LGBTQIA+ ally
  - » Managing respectful research relationships
- Scoping a plan to understand the feasibility of using restorative practices and principles as part of both the prevention of and response to harmful behaviours (in line with Stream 2, Action 2.2 of the Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan (2024–2026)).
- Expanding the student activation model to further engage the student voice in the development and implementation of prevention activities.
- Implementing the legislative requirements under the *Work Health and Safety (Sexual and Gender-based Harassment) Code of Practice 2025* and the *National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence* (pending Royal Assent).
- Developing resources to support international student needs with regards to the prevention of gender-based violence and access to support.
- Developing and implementing the cultural and behavioural expectations action plan in ANU on-campus accommodation.
- Establishing a working group to support ANU monitor and evaluate actions detailed in the Student Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2024-2026, as articulated in Stream 6 of the Plan.

# Links and resources

## **Respect@ANU**

(contains all information in regard to prevention and response of harmful behaviours at ANU)

[www.anu.edu.au/about/strategic-planning/respectanu](http://www.anu.edu.au/about/strategic-planning/respectanu)

## **Sexual harassment and sexual assault response and support (students)**

[www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/getting-help-at-anu/sexual-harassment-and-sexual-assault-response](http://www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/getting-help-at-anu/sexual-harassment-and-sexual-assault-response)

## **Harmful Behaviours Disclosure Response and Support**

[www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/getting-help-at-anu/harmful-behaviours-disclosure-response-and](http://www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/getting-help-at-anu/harmful-behaviours-disclosure-response-and)

# Contact us

This report can be found in electronic format on the University's website at:

[www.anu.edu.au/about/strategic-planning/respectanu](http://www.anu.edu.au/about/strategic-planning/respectanu)

For further information about this report, please contact:

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