

UWA

# SAFER COMMUNITIES

## Working Group



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WESTERN  
AUSTRALIA**

Key Achievements in Student Safety,  
Inclusion and Wellbeing in 2022



# Who are the SAFER COMMUNITIES WORKING GROUP?

# CONTENTS

The UWA Safer Communities Working Group was convened in 2016, with the delegated responsibility and support of the Vice Chancellor, to oversee and report on initiatives aimed at preventing and responding to safety concerns and concerning behaviour in the University-wide environment.

The Working Group is Co-Chaired by the UWA Director or Student Life and the Student Guild President. Working Group membership includes representatives from a wide variety of University departments, representation from College Row and student leaders from the UWA Student Guild:

- Associate Director, Success and Wellbeing
- Associate Director, HR and Student Services, UWA Student Guild
- Inclusion Officer, UWA Sport
- Manager, Student Incident and Support
- Manager, Integrity and Standards Unit
- Manager, Organisation Development and Workforce Diversity, Human Resources
- Communications Manager, Brand, Marketing and Recruitment
- Associate University Librarian, University Library
- College Row Wellbeing Adviser, Student Life
- Graduate Education Officer, Graduate Research School
- Representative, UWA College Row
- Security Operations Officer, Campus Management
- Welfare Officer, UWA Student Guild
- Women's Officer, UWA Student Guild
- Residential Student Department President, UWA Student Guild

The Working Group's Executive Officer is the Senior Health Promotion Officer from the Health Promotion Unit.

Strategic vision and policy	1
Leadership and governance	2
Creating safe environments	3
Responsive support services	4
Prevention and cultural change	5
Student-led initiatives	5
University-wide programs	6
Student-focussed initiatives	7
Staff focussed initiatives	7





# Strategic Vision AND POLICY

## UWA MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING FRAMEWORK

The UWA Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework has been co-designed by students and staff to ensure a whole of institution, strengths-based approach. The aim is to create an inclusive university experience that encourages a proactive, accessible, holistic and student-centered approach to mental health and wellbeing. The Framework's principles and deliverables were informed by extensive student and staff engagement, as well as Orygen's Australian University Mental Health Framework.

### REVISED SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY

2022 saw the release of an updated Sexual Misconduct Policy to guide the prevention of sexual misconduct and contribute to safe and secure environments across the University community. The policy scope includes University property, digital environments, university managed student accommodation, university managed employee accommodation; and university managed sporting and recreational clubs.

### SERIOUS STUDENT INCIDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This new procedure provides a clear and proactive process for decision-making and managing serious incidents involving students of the University in an effective, consistent, compassionate and timely manner. A 'serious student incident' is a traumatic event, or the imminent threat of such, which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. In the case of an incident, identified staff are mobilised to activate appropriate support services, notify relevant stakeholders and provide debriefing and follow-up care.

The UWA Sexual Misconduct Policy, has been renewed and updated to ensure that university responses are aligned with best-practice.

## Leadership and GOVERNANCE

### GROUP OF EIGHT SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT WORKING GROUP

In 2022, The University continued as a member of the Group of Eight Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Working Group to work toward creating commonality between Go8 universities with uniform standards for best practice and reporting. The Director of Student Life and Manager of the Integrity and Standards Unit represent UWA on the group to build stronger networks with other universities across the country.

### STUDENT REFERENCE GROUP CONVENED

The Student Reference Group was convened in 2022 and seeks to ensure that students are at the center of program design, development and continuous quality improvement. The Group consists of 20 members works together with UWA staff to find collaborative and creative solutions to emerging challenges or gaps in service delivery with a focus on diversity and continued partnerships with the Student Guild, UWA Sport and College Row. The Group aims to include a range of students who identify as undergraduate, postgraduate, higher degree by research, international, domestic, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTQIA+, and students enrolled at the Albany campus.





# Creating SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

## SAFETY INITIATIVES IN THE LIBRARIES

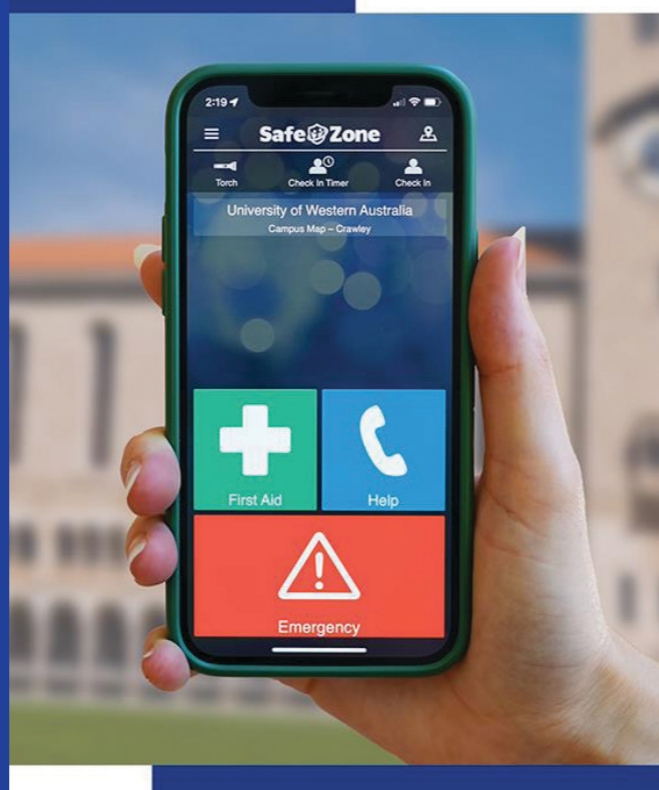
The Library team have embedded a range of proactive safety strategies and communications for students in response to the National Student Safety Survey results. These initiatives have included, upgraded CCTV coverage and swipe access, increased Security patrols, and use of the existing PAM notification system to notify Library staff if someone is feeling unsafe.

A range of print and online resources on wellbeing services and sexual harm have been made available and staff have received additional training to support students.



## Launch of the SAFE ZONE APP

With the simple press of a button, staff and students can now be connected directly with UWA Security if they ever need help on campus, 24/7. Students and staff can access first aid, non-urgent help and emergency assistance, plus be notified if there is an incident on campus that requires action.



## Responsive SUPPORT SERVICES

### INTRODUCTION OF THE COLLEGE ROW WELLBEING ADVISER

The College Row Wellbeing Adviser role was introduced in 2022 to provide specialist advice and support to residential students and staff. These services include assisting with complex care and support for students and consultancy to staff on issues related to perceived risk to self or others; issues of sexual assault/harassment; critical incidents, and fast tracked referral to Wellbeing Services.

### THE LIVING ROOM POP-UPS

The Living Room is a welcoming, and inclusive drop-in space at Shenton House that promotes wellbeing through early intervention, peer support and low barrier access to UWA services.

2022 saw the introduction of Pop-up Living Rooms across other areas of UWA, including Reid Library and the Nedlands Campus. Pop-up Living Room spaces will continue and expand in 2023.

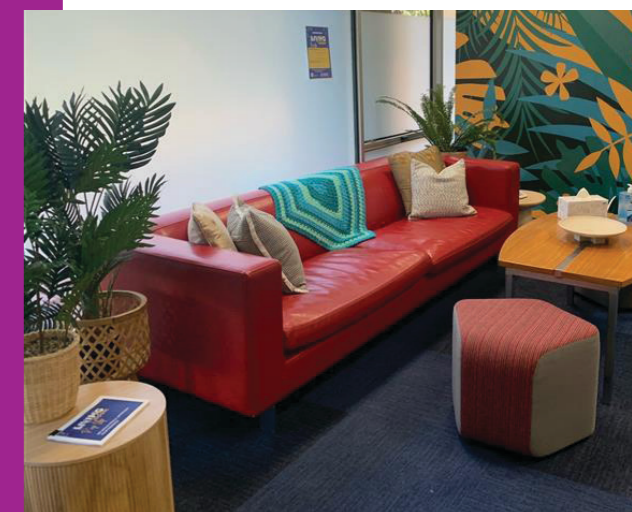
### TARGETED WELLBEING SUPPORT FOR HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH STUDENTS

UWA's higher degree by research (HDR) students now have access to a dedicated Wellbeing Adviser and additional mental health resources. The new initiative was developed in response to student feedback collected during formation of the recently launched UWA Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework. Student Life, in collaboration with the Graduate Research School, developed dedicated resources, including access to a Wellbeing Adviser and a commitment to improved processes for raising individual student concerns.

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion CONTACT OFFICER NETWORK

In 2022, a new Contact Officer Network was launched to assist staff and students seeking advice on discrimination, harassment, bullying, unfair treatment or sexual misconduct. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Contact Officers are situated in a number of schools and business units across the University, and support staff and students to make informed decisions about their concerns.

Staff on the Network receive additional training to provide information and preliminary support to any student or staff member seeking to explore their rights and obligations under UWA policies and/or the relevant legislation and to act as agents of cultural change at a local level.



ABOVE: The Living Room Pop-Up in Reid Library



# Prevention and CULTURAL CHANGE

Educational initiatives and campaigns aiming to promote a safe, respectful, inclusive and healthy University community for students have been embedded in multiple leadership programs across College Row and The Student Guild. These initiatives form the core business of the Health Promotion Unit in Student Life and Organisational Development and Workforce Diversity in Human Resources for staff.



In 2022, UWA remained a Gold Level Mental Health First Aid Skilled Workplace



## STUDENT-LED INITIATIVES

### GUILD STUDENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING REVIEW

*UWA Student Guild*

The Student Guild, in consultation with the 150+ student clubs, completed a review of the compulsory Student Leadership Training. While currently useful in providing communication and leadership skills, regulatory awareness and basic wellbeing understanding, a greater emphasis on membership awareness and crisis support will be introduced to address challenges in student club environments.

### SAFE CLUBS AND EVENTS OFFICER NETWORK

*UWA Student Guild Societies Council and Women's Department*

In 2022, the Student Guild Societies Council and the Women's Department collaborated to introduce a Safe Clubs and Events Officer Network in response to results from the 2021 National Student Safety Survey. Students in the Network will now attend club events to act as safe contact people for students affected by sexual harm and gender-based violence. Coming to the close of 2022, the Safe Clubs and Events Officers have been on-site at major and minor club events, and the position will continue to be workshopped into 2023.

### 'ASK FOR ANGELA' INITIATIVE

*UWA Student Guild, The Tav*

'Ask for Angela' is an initiative which aims to help patrons to seek help to safely extricate themselves from difficult situations in licensed venues. Patrons can ask the bar staff for 'Angela', who will then discretely guide the person away from a potentially unsafe situation. This initiative has been successfully implemented in the Guild Tavern since 2017.

### SEXUAL HEALTH ONLINE HUB

*UWA Student Guild and Normal Co.*

In 2022, the Student Guild launched a Sexual Health Hub, in partnership with Normal Co. The Hub is located on the UWA Student Guild website under the Student Assist tab, and works to provide inclusive, low barrier and practical information on student sexual health, sexual experiences, sexuality and gender-identity, consent and boundary awareness. Presented as blog posts, the content is easy to access, fun to read and acts as a low-barrier tool to inform and empower students.

### WELLBEANS PROGRAM

*UWA Student Guild Volunteering and Welfare Department*

Run by students for students, the Student Guild's Wellbeans are active in providing peer support and medical first aid to all students at large social events and celebrations. Organised between the Guild Volunteering Department and Welfare Department, the program runs through student volunteers who work passionately, professionally and safely to care for their peers.

## UNIVERSITY-WIDE PROGRAMS

### MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

*Health Promotion Unit and Safety, Health and Wellbeing*

Mental Health First Aid Training enables participants to develop the knowledge and skills to provide support to others who may be developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis, including traumatic events. Mental Health First Aid Training has been delivered at UWA since 2002. In 2022, UWA remained as a Gold Level Mental Health First Aid Skilled Workplace.

### STEP UP BYSTANDER TRAINING

*Health Promotion Unit and Organisational Development and Workforce Diversity, College Row*

Step Up is a prosocial behaviour and bystander intervention program that encourages individuals to actively help others in their communities by building participant knowledge and confidence to intervene in a wide variety of unsafe or risky situations, including harmful alcohol or other drug consumption, sexual harm, bullying, discrimination and stalking. This program is available to staff and students and is delivered by upskilled Peer Facilitators on College Row.

### RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES OF SEXUAL HARM WORKSHOPS

*Health Promotion Unit*

This training program was piloted in 2022 to build students' knowledge, skills and confidence to help someone who has experienced sexual harm. By the

end of the session, students reported increased understanding of the impact of sexual harm, knowledge and confidence in responding to a disclosure and could correctly identify key services at UWA and externally for victim/survivors. After a successful pilot in 2022, this program will be introduced as an ongoing offering in 2023.

## RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS Online Module

UWA has partnered with Curtin University to introduce the online Respectful Relationships Module.

The module has been customised for the UWA context to feature university values, policies, and support services. Respectful Relationships is planned for launch in 2023 along side a comprehensive awareness-raising campaign co-designed with students.



# STUDENT FOCUSSED INITIATIVES

## REDUCING THE RISK OF SEXUAL TRAUMA TRAINING FOR STUDENT LEADERS

*Sexual Assault Resource Centre*

This training is delivered by Sexual Assault Resource Centre and forms part of compulsory Student Leadership Training Programs within the Student Guild and for residential Advisers on College Row. The training covers sexual harm awareness, consent and respectful use of technology, the impact of violence and responding to disclosures with empathy. UWA staff deliver the final module to outline university-specific support and reporting options.

## BECOMING A RESEARCH PROFESSIONAL ONLINE COURSE

*Graduate Research School*

This online course is available on Blackboard includes a module on Student Supervisor Relationships. The content covers important information on student wellbeing and mental health, respectful relationships in line with the Universities Australia Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships and utilises videos vignettes developed by the Australian Council Graduate Research as part of the Respect. Now. Always. initiative.

## NEGOTIATING CONSENT: PEER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

*Health Promotion Unit*

The Health Promotion Unit Peer Educators ran activities on campus and College Row to encourage students to talk about consent negotiation, respectful relationships and University support services. The Peer Educators received training in the drivers of gender-based violence, communication and were required to complete the online Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence Training prior to volunteering.

# STAFF FOCUSSED INITIATIVES

## ONGOING DEVELOPMENT FOR HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH SUPERVISORS

*Graduate Research School*

The Graduate Research School provide a range of professional development opportunities for higher degree research (HDR) supervisors. The program aims to increase awareness of the resources available to support the wellbeing of HDR students and supervisors, including: pastoral care responsibilities, reporting and disclosure requirements, support services, and reasonable accommodation of requests as well as outlining appropriate relationships, cross-cultural communication, constructive feedback and conflict resolution. The Supervisor Online Induction and Refresher modules additionally include information about supporting student wellbeing and understanding appropriate relationships.

## SUPERVISING DOCTORAL STUDIES ONLINE COURSE

*Graduate Research School*

Supervising Doctoral Students is an online course available on Blackboard LMS to any staff undertaking supervision of a doctoral student. The course includes a module on managing progress which highlights common skills required during Supervision, such as supporting candidates with disabilities and managing relationships.



# ALLY TRAINING

This in-person workshop aims to raise participant awareness of the life experience, issues and needs of LGBTIQ+ staff and students with a particular focus on campus and work or study experiences.

The program is delivered by trained facilitators from the UWA LGBTIQ+ Working Group and features a lived experience panel at each session.

## UNCONCIOUS BIAS WORKSHOPS

*Graduate Research School*

This workshop, delivered by Organisational Development and Workforce Diversity, introduces participants to the concept of unconscious bias, raises awareness of the impact it has in the workplace, and explores ways to proactively challenge our own and others' biases, including those based on gender and sexuality. Participants are encouraged to face and share their own biases, and reflect on how and when these biases may have emerged. students with a particular focus on campus and work or study

## RESPECT IN THE WORKPLACE ONLINE MODULE

*Human Resources*

Human Resources provide a short online course for staff to understand their obligations and learn about unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation.

## UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA MODULE: SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

*Organisational Development and Workforce Diversity*

Human Resources provide an online package featuring a sexual harm awareness module developed by the Australian Psychological Society for Universities Australia. The aim of these modules is to increase awareness of the drivers of violence against women, key skills in responding to a disclosure of sexual harm and promoting gender equity in the workplace.



IMAGE: Winner of the Sense of Belonging Campaign, 'Grow' by Hermione Zhou



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Information in this document was published in March 2023 and is subject to review.



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