The Women's College
within The University of Queensland
ready to lead

University Colleges Australia

Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan

The Women's College

Approved Version 1.0 9 December 2025

Introduction

The Women's College offers a vibrant living and learning community dedicated to empowering more than 250 residents and 50 associate students as they pursue tertiary education at their chosen Brisbane university. Women's is more than just a place to stay. The College offers accommodation, academic and wellbeing support, and many programs designed to empower and prepare women for the challenges and opportunities of university life and their future careers.

Established in 1914 at Kangaroo Point in Brisbane and then relocated to The University of Queensland St Lucia campus, the College has served as a community fostering academic excellence, leadership and inclusivity.

The College plays a pivotal role in promoting diversity and inclusivity. It actively recruits and supports young women, particularly from rural and regional Queensland, providing them with an enriching home-away-from-home as they transition to university life.

The Women's College is affiliated with several Brisbane universities – The University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology, Griffith University, Australian Catholic University and The University of Southern Queensland.

The College Council provides governance and oversight, shaping policy, endorsing the budget, and guiding the strategic vision and growth of the College.

This Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan (Whole-of-Organisation Plan/the Plan) is framed by an understanding of the gendered drivers of violence against women as articulated in Australia's national framework to prevent violence against women, Change the Story. These gendered drivers underpin the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032, Australia's national policy framework to end gender-based violence in one generation. Some of these gendered drivers are:

- condoning of violence against women
- rigid gender stereotypes
- men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life
- male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women.

Other forms of discrimination and inequality – such as racism, homophobia, transphobia – intersect with gender inequality to compound people's experiences of violence.

Evidence from *Change the Course* (2017) and the *National Student Safety Survey* (2021) shows that colleges are high-risk environments for gender-based violence to occur. Evidence also shows that the likelihood of violence increases when men who hold discriminatory attitudes towards women and other people misuse alcohol.

The Women's College is committed to reducing the prevalence of gender-based violence and providing a safe environment for our residents, staff and visitors.

This Plan was informed by a multi-method approach to ensure a comprehensive understanding of systemic risks, enablers, and barriers. The College conducted focus groups with residents (student leaders 2025 and 2026), College Leadership Team, and staff to capture perceptions of gender-based violence, safety and respect within the College environment. Internal data was reviewed, including records of disclosures, formal reports, and incident response outcomes from the past five years. The College analysed findings from previous student surveys to identify patterns of concern and areas of strength. Additionally, all current policies and procedures relating to gender-based violence, sexual harassment, alcohol management, and codes of conduct were examined for alignment with best practice and compliance requirements under the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence (the National Code). This evidence-informed process ensures that the assessment reflects both qualitative and quantitative insights and supports targeted, effective actions.

The Whole-of-Organisation Plan provides a clear and evidence-informed overview of The Women's College's strengths, challenges and areas for improvement in relation to preventing gender-based violence and supporting victim-survivors. These are presented as enablers, risks and barriers in accordance with the language used in the National Code. This assessment identifies areas of operation relevant to The Women's College as they may align with areas defined in the National Code.

The assessment will support The Women's College's strategic decision-making, guide future planning and ensure alignment with national expectations and sector good practice.

The Plan outlines The Women's College's commitments in meeting the requirements of the National Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence in Higher Education (National Code). It prioritises early intervention and continuous improvement as core principles in alignment with the National Code. The Plan establishes a coordinated framework to prevent gender-based violence, support those affected, and ensure effective, accountable responses across the whole organisation.

The Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan is a significant evolving and foundational document that guides the College in how to prevent and respond to GBV. It evolves by incorporating changes from experience and increased knowledge and any changing circumstances or legislation.

The Plan has been informed by a Whole-of-Organisation Assessment of the enablers, systemic risks and barriers to preventing gender-based violence in The Women's College. **The Assessment is provided in Attachment A.**

The Whole-of-Organisation Plan is structured into five key relevant focus areas that align with the National Code:

1. Accountable Leadership and Governance
2. Safe Environments and Systems
3. Knowledge and Capability
4. Safety and Support
5. Data, Evidence and Impact.

1. Accountable leadership and governance

Mandatory requirements

National Code Standard summary		Key actions	Evidence of compliance
7.2	A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to prepare, implement and publish on its website a Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan.	• Publish the Whole-of-Organisation Plan on the website	• Website page where Plan is published • The Women's College consulted with stakeholders – staff and student leaders - on Plan's development • Governance Committee of the Council reviewed, evaluated and endorsed the Whole-of-Organisation Plan for Council approval.
7.3	A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to monitor and measure the impact of the Prevention and Response Plan on an ongoing basis and update the Prevention and Response Plan at least every four years.	• Conduct mandatory annual training for student leaders, staff and Council on GBV and respectful relationships. • Create a "Respect and Safety" leadership charter signed by all College Leadership Team and Council members. • Establish visible leadership commitment (e.g. statements from Head of College & CEO, inclusion in strategic plans) • Explore and revise key metrics in routine staff and student survey instruments to provide information on attitudes, norms and culture within the organisation. • Embed continuous improvement processes through annual reviews and stakeholder feedback loops to refine prevention and response measures. • Ensure future evaluation includes the opportunity for those who have experienced GBV to have a voice in the process • Evaluate annual GBV training for effectiveness and update content. • Include the National Code as a standing item on Governance Committee and Senior Management agendas. • Produce annual GBV prevention reports with recommendations for continuous improvement.	• Planned dates of future review cycles • Excerpt from Minutes of governance meetings showing GBV, and National Code discussions. • Training Attendance records • Student and staff survey data • Signed leadership charter • GBV reporting documentation

2. Safe environments and systems

Mandatory requirements

National Code Standard summary	Key actions	Evidence of compliance
7.4(a) A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to: • require its staff to declare any previous investigations or substantiated allegations of gender-based violence in similar roles • consider any declaration and associated risks in employment/engagement decision making • consider any substantiated allegations found during a person's employment with the College in promotion/recognition processes • require staff to declare any existing or previous intimate personal relationship with a resident and manage and monitor any associated risks.	• Seek declarations from existing Council members and staff, new Council members prior to appointment, new staff prior to employment, and student leaders before commencement of their leadership roles • Consider any declarations and associated risks in employment/engagement decision-making • Seek declarations from Council members and staff regarding any existing or previous intimate personal relationship with a current resident and manage and monitor risks. • Develop a risk management plan when conflicts of interest are declared • Embed GBV prevention in all student-led events through inclusion in mandatory risk assessments/student event management plans	• Employment/contracting/ volunteer screening forms • Declaration forms - completed by Council members staff and student leaders • Staff-Student Relationships Policy which details how declarations will be considered in decision making • New conflict of interest forms and plans for monitoring associated risks • Risk Assessment Management Plan • Event risk assessments (internal and external events) and event management plan with GBV inclusion
7.4(b) A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to: • prohibit the use of a Non-disclosure Agreement (NDA), unless requested by the Discloser • if requested, ensure it does not stop the Discloser from sharing information as part of seeking support • ensure any settlement agreements do not contain a non-disparagement clause.	• Ensure no NDAs to be used at the College unless explicitly requested by the discloser.	• GBV policy statement includes a statement about the use of NDAs
7.4(c) A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to: • adopt the Provider's policies and procedures on preventing and responding to Gender-based Violence OR have and implement their own that meet National Code requirements • develop and review the policy at least every three years in consultation with relevant stakeholders.	• Develop the College's own GBV Policy and Procedures which will be reviewed at least every three years	• Policy and procedure on gender-based violence • Documented consultation with staff and student leaders • Expert review of GBV Policy and Procedures

3. Knowledge and capability

Mandatory requirements

National Code Standard summary		Key actions	Evidence of compliance

7.5	A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to:
	• require residents and staff to complete prevention education and training and responding to disclosures training that:
	  ○ meets requirements of Standard 3
	  ○ is tailored to the student accommodation environment
	  ○ is delivered or approved by the provider
	• promote evidence-based prevention messaging tailored to the student accommodation environment
	• evaluate any initiatives and use findings to inform future activities.
		• Deliver mandatory Council and staff training on GBV annually
		• Conduct mandatory training of all students on GBV – delivered by UQ Respect and mandatory online modules (co-created by the College with ADES Australia) covering consent, respectful relationships and bystander intervention
		• Conduct mandatory training of student leaders in GBV prevention and response by UQ Respect and Kim Copeland of Ayon Consulting and training by senior expert staff on National Code requirements (in addition to other trainings detailed above)
		• Deliver prevention education prior to or immediately upon commencement of residency to ensure early intervention.
		• Monitor early indicators of harmful attitudes through surveys and informal feedback.
			• Training Strategy document which details student education and training
			• Record of training completed by staff and students
			• Sample from Student Portal of the education and training on GBV
			• Evidence of responding to disclosures training for First Responder staff – UQ Respect, ACU Training, Kim Copeland, other accredited specialists such as ConnectedLe
			• Evidence-based messaging via social media, orientation programs, posters displayed across College

7.6	A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to ensure risk assessments are only undertaken by people with expertise prescribed in Standard 3, and when internal capability is not sufficient, engage a person with the requisite expertise.	• Undertake Risk assessments internally by staff with requisite expertise as required in Standard 3 • Engage external experts, if required	• Evidence of Risk Assessment procedure and of staff qualifications

4. Safety and support

Mandatory requirements

	National Code Standard summary	Key actions	Evidence of compliance
7.7 (a) – (c)	A provider must require a student accommodation provider to: • ensure its responses, practices and support services are safe, person centered and trauma informed • provide or facilitate access to support services to disclosers and respondents • promote and disseminate information on how residents and staff can access policies, procedures and support services.	• Review training to ensure all staff and students are educated in trauma- informed, culturally safe practices • Ensure trauma-informed, culturally safe approaches are embedded in relevant policies • Ensure early support pathways are available upon first disclosure, even if no formal report is made	• Trauma informed and culturally aware practices are included in all relevant staff policies which are accessed by staff through HRIS (Employment Hero) and by students via the Student Portal • Partnerships/arrangements with the universities and/or external support services e.g. UQ Respect, UQ Ally Network
7.7(d)	A provider must require a student accommodation provider to undertake a risk assessment following every disclosure and formal report.	• Create a Risk Assessment documentation	• Risk Assessment Plan
7.7 (e)(i)	Where a disclosure relates to behaviour occurring in residence or at an event organised by the residence, a provider must require a student accommodation provider to take all necessary action to manage risk, including relocation of the respondent where required and facilitating urgent access to support services.	• Regular review of disclosure procedures and flowcharts	• Flowchart for student disclosure procedure co-developed with Resident Assistant team (student peer support pastoral care team) • Range of physical safeguards across the College **(as outlined in the Assessment document)**
7.7 (e)(ii)	A provider must have arrangements in place with a student accommodation provider to enable a discloser to choose the provider to lead the response to a disclosure, and the student accommodation provider must cooperate fully and implement any outcomes decided by the provider.	• Ensure the Gender-based Violence Policy enables the disclosure to have voice, choice and agency in who leads the response	• GBV Policy aligns with and informs the discloser about the support options at individual universities.
7.7 (e)(iii)	A provider must have arrangements in place with a student accommodation provider to enable a discloser to choose the student accommodation provider to lead the response to the disclosure, and the student accommodation provider must: • undertake a risk assessment within 48 hours and from this determine necessary safety measures (including relocation of the respondent) and immediately implement them • manage and monitor risk • share necessary information with the provider to protect safety of others • implement support plans for both disclosers and respondents that meet requirements of Standard 4 within 48 hours.	• Ensure all of the requirements of Standard 7.7 (e)(iii) are reflected in the GBV Policy	• Embedded processes in place to meet 48-hour timeframes for risk assessments and support in GBV Policy and risk assessment documentation. • Documented risk management processes Information sharing protocols with the relevant university which detail confidentiality limits when there are significant safety concerns

5. Data, evidence and impact

Mandatory requirements

National Code Standard summary		Key actions	Evidence of compliance
7.8	A provider must require a student accommodation provider to collect and report data prescribed by Standard 6, where applicable.	• Engage RespectX as a platform to collect and analyse data to facilitate reporting requirements • Use collected data to drive continuous improvement, publishing annual summaries of progress and enhancements to demonstrate transparency and accountability	• RespectX contract • Data summaries