

IN CONFIDENCE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 10AM TUESDAY 1 AUGUST



# BRIEF ON NATIONAL SURVEY ON SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

## Key statistics

- One in five survey respondents experienced **sexual harassment** at university in 2016 (21%).
- 1.6% of survey respondents experienced **sexual assault** in a 'university setting'\* in 2015 or 2016.
- The majority of perpetrators of both sexual harassment and sexual assault were **men**.
- In 2016, trans and gender diverse students were **more likely to experience sexual harassment** in a 'university setting' than women or men.
- In 2015 or 2016, women were **four times more likely than men** to be sexually assaulted at a residential college or university residence.
- In 2016, one in four students **witnessed** another student being **sexually harassed** in a 'university setting'. 21% of these students took action.
- 1.1% of students **witnessed** another student being **sexually assaulted** in a 'university setting' in 2016. 37% of these students took action.
- 2% of students who were **sexually harassed** in a 'university setting' **reported** it to their university.
- 4% of students who were **sexually harassed** in a 'university setting' **sought support** from their university.
- Approximately **half of survey respondents had little or no knowledge** about where to go to make a complaint or where to seek support in relation to sexual harassment.
- 9% of students who were **sexually assaulted** in a 'university setting' **reported** it to their university.
- 14% of students who were **sexually assaulted** in a 'university setting' **sought support** from their university.
- Over half of survey respondents **had little or no knowledge** about where to go to make a complaint or where to seek support in relation to sexual assault.

\*The term 'university setting' includes incidents that occurred on public transport while travelling to or from university.

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## NOTES ON COMPARISONS

As noted in the AHRC's accompanying 'guidance note' regarding institutional reports, it is not valid to compare institutional results with that of another institution. Please refer to the language used in the AHRC note when making any public comment.

## NOTES ON READING THE NATIONAL REPORT

- In ALL sexual assault and sexual harassment charts, public transport has been categorised as a "university setting".
- The AHRC has noted, in text only, where public transport has been excluded from figures relating to "university setting's".

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Students were asked whether they experienced sexual harassment in both 2015 and 2016, and then asked details about the most recent incident (which could have been 2015 or 2016).

Incidence rates and characteristics of students who experienced sexual harassment relate to 2016 as the data were more reliable.

Figures of characteristics of perpetrators of sexual harassment are from 2015 or 2016.

Figures where public transport have been included as a 'university setting' have been flagged.

### GENERAL

- In 2016, one in five survey respondents experienced sexual harassment at university (21%). These settings included:
  - » Library
  - » Teaching space
  - » Social space (bar, shops)
  - » Recreational space (gym, sports fields)
  - » Grounds
  - » University or residence social event
  - » Online environment
- In 2015 or 2016, the three most common university environments where students experienced sexual harassment were:
  - » University grounds
  - » University teaching space
  - » University social space

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- In 2015 or 2016, the most common forms of sexual harassment experienced in a 'university setting' (including public transport) were:
  - » Inappropriate staring or leering
  - » Sexually suggestive comments or jokes
  - » Intrusive questions about a person's private life or physical appearance
- In 2015 or 2016, 3% of students who were sexually harassed said the incident happened at their residential college or university residence.
- In 2016, one in twenty students experienced technology-based harassment in a 'university setting'.

## **VICTIMS**

### **Gender identity**

- In 2016, women (25%) were more likely to be sexually harassed in a 'university setting' than men (15%).
- In 2016, trans and gender diverse students (42%) were more likely to have been sexually harassed in a 'university setting' than women (25%) or men (15%).
- In 2016, trans and gender diverse students were more likely than women or men to experience the following types of sexual harassment:
  - » Intrusive questions about private life or physical appearance
  - » Inappropriate staring or leering
  - » Sexually suggestive comments or jokes.

### **Sexual orientation**

- In 2016, students who identified as bisexual (36%), gay, lesbian or homosexual (34%), asexual (38%) and undecided (36%) were more likely to have been sexually harassed in a 'university setting' than students who identified as heterosexual (19%).

### **Undergraduate and postgraduate**

- In 2016, postgraduate students (10%) were almost twice as likely as undergraduate students (6%) to be sexually harassed by a lecturer or tutor.
- In 2016, undergraduates (23%) were more likely than postgraduates (15%) to be sexually harassed in a 'university setting'.

### **International and domestic**

- In 2016, domestic students (22%) were more likely than international students (18%) to have been sexually harassed in a 'university setting'.

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### **Cultural diversity**

- In 2016, students who spoke mainly English at home (22%) were more likely to have been sexually harassed than students whose main language at home was not English (17%).

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander**

- In 2016, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (32%) were more likely than those who did not identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (21%) to have been sexually harassed in a 'university setting'.

### **Disability**

- In 2016, students with a disability (30%) were more likely than students without a disability (21%) to be sexually harassed in a 'university setting'.

### **Commencing and continuing**

- In 2016, continuing students (22%) were more likely than commencing students (19%) to have been sexually harassed in a 'university setting'.

## **PERPETRATORS**

### **Known**

- In 2015 or 2016, almost half of students (45%) who were sexually harassed in a 'university setting' knew some or all of the perpetrators in the most recent incident.
- Of all students who knew the perpetrator, more than two-thirds (68%) said the perpetrator was a student from their university.
- In 2015 or 2016, domestic students (37%) who were sexually harassed in a 'university setting' were more likely than international students (28%) to know all of the perpetrators.
- In 2015 or 2016, men (42%) who were sexually harassed in a 'university setting' were more likely than women (33%) to know all of the perpetrators.

### **Unknown**

- In 2015 or 2016, half of students who were sexually harassed in a 'university setting' did not know the perpetrators.
- In 2015 or 2016, women (55%) were more likely than men (38%) to be harassed by someone they didn't know.

### **Number of perpetrators**

- In 2015 or 2016, 48% of all students who were sexually harassed in a 'university setting' were harassed by a single perpetrator.
- 52% of women and 41% of men who were sexually harassed in a 'university setting' were harassed by a single perpetrator.

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### **Gender of perpetrator**

- In 2015 or 2016, the majority of perpetrators of sexual harassment in a 'university setting' were men only (71%), followed equally by women and men perpetrators (11%) and women only perpetrators (11%).
- In the most recent incident of sexual harassment in a 'university setting' both women (86%) and men (37%) were more likely to have been sexually harassed by men only compared with women and men perpetrators (22%) and women only perpetrators (30%).
- Trans and gender diverse students more likely to have been harassed by men only (49%) than women and men perpetrators (26%) and women only (5%).

### **BYSTANDERS**

- In 2016, one in four students witnessed another student being sexually harassed in a 'university setting'.
- Of students who witnessed, 21% took action.
- Most common forms of action were:
  - » Talking to the victim (74%)
  - » Talking to the offender (42%)
  - » Something else (20%)
  - » Spoke to someone outside the university about what to do (12%)
  - » Spoke to someone at the university about what to do (9%)
- Most common reasons for not taking action included:
  - » Didn't think it was serious enough to intervene (49%)
  - » Didn't know what to do (28%)
  - » Didn't want to get involved (24%)
  - » Witness knew other people were helping the victim (17%)
  - » Didn't think it was their responsibility (15%)
  - » Victim handled the incident by themselves (15%)

### **REPORTING TO UNIVERSITIES**

- In 2015 or 2016, 2% of students who were sexually harassed in a 'university setting' made a formal report or complaint to anyone in their university.
- Of this 2% who made a report:
  - » 35% said the university had provided an explanation of the reporting process
  - » 32% said university did not provide an explanation
  - » 22% were unsure
- Of this 2% who made a report:
  - » 18% were very satisfied with the reporting process

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- » 23% were satisfied
- » 23% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- » 21% were dissatisfied
- » 15% were very dissatisfied
- No student who identified as trans or gender diverse made a formal report to the university.
- In 2015 or 2016, 94% of students who were sexually harassed in a 'university setting' did not make a formal report or complaint to anyone in their university.
- The most common reasons for not reporting were:
  - » Did not think their experience was serious enough (68%)
  - » Did not think they needed help (53%)
  - » Did not know to whom to report (16%)
  - » Did not know how to report (12%)
  - » Thought that incident would be too hard to prove (11%)
- 13% of students who were sexually harassed reported it to the police.

**SEEKING SUPPORT**

- 4% of students who were sexually harassed sought support from their university.
- The three most common places in universities accessed for support were:
  - » Student support services (43%)
  - » Someone who is responsible for the welfare of students at college, dorm or hall (16%)
  - » Campus security (9%)
- Of the 4% of students who sought support from within their university, over half were either very satisfied or satisfied with the support they received across the following support types:
  - » Student support services (71%)
  - » Campus security (65%)
  - » Someone in my faculty or school (lecturer or tutor) (60%)
  - » Some other person employed at my college/dorm/hall (60%)
  - » Someone who is responsible for my welfare at my college/dorm/hall (58%)
  - » Some other university employee (53%)
- Of the 4% of students who sought support from within their university, one-third or less were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the support they received across the following support types:
  - » Some other person employed at my college/dorm/hall (29%)
  - » Someone who is responsible for my welfare at my college/dorm/hall (26%)
  - » Student support services (24%)
  - » Someone in my faculty or school (lecturer or tutor) (24%)

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- » Some other university employee (20%)
- » Campus security (12%)
- International students (6%) were more likely than domestic students (3%) to seek support from university in relation to the most recent incident.
- Men (51%) were more likely to seek support from student services than women (43%).
- 92% of students who had been sexually harassed in a 'university setting' (including public transport) did not seek support or assistance from their university.

**External support**

- 18% of those sexually harassed in a 'university setting' sought support external to their university.
- Trans and gender diverse students (43%) were more likely than women (20%) or men (12%) to seek support outside their university.
- The most common external places sought for support were:
  - » Friends (76%)
  - » Family (35%)
  - » Fellow student (26%)
  - » Mental health professional (12%)
  - » Police (5%)

**KNOWLEDGE OF UNIVERSITY POLICIES, SUPPORT SERVICES AND REPORTING PROCEDURES ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

- Of all students surveyed on where to go to make a complaint:
  - » 28% had no knowledge
  - » 32% had little knowledge
  - » 31% had some knowledge
  - » 7% had a lot of knowledge
  - » 3% had full knowledge
- Of all students surveyed on where to seek support and assistance:
  - » 18% had no knowledge
  - » 29% had little knowledge
  - » 41% had some knowledge
  - » 9% had a lot of knowledge
  - » 3% had full knowledge
- Of all students surveyed on university policy:
  - » 22% had no knowledge

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- » 30% had little knowledge
- » 34% had some knowledge
- » 11% had a lot of knowledge
- » 3% had full knowledge



## SEXUAL ASSAULT

Students were asked whether they experienced sexual assault in both 2015 and 2016, and then asked details about the most recent incident (which could have been 2015 or 2016).

Incidence rates and characteristics of students who experienced sexual assault relate to 2015 or 2016.

Figures of characteristics of perpetrators of sexual harassment are from 2015 or 2016.

All figures on sexual assault in 'university settings' INCLUDE public transport unless noted otherwise.

### GENERAL

- In 2015 or 2016, 1.6% of survey respondents experienced sexual assault in a 'university setting'.
  - » Library
  - » Teaching space
  - » Social space (bar, shops)
  - » Recreational space (gym, sports fields)
  - » Grounds
  - » University or residence social event
  - » University employment
  - » Public transport to or from the university
- In 2015 or 2016, the three most common university environments where students experienced the most recent sexual assault were:
  - » University or residence social event (21%)
  - » University grounds (10%)
  - » University residence or college (10%)
- In 2015 or 2016, 15% of students experienced sexual assault on public transport to and from university.
- In 2015 or 2016, 2% of all students who were sexually assaulted said the most recent incident occurred on professional placement.

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## **VICTIMS**

### **Gender identity**

- In 2015 or 2016, women (2.3%) were three times more likely to be sexually assaulted in a 'university setting' than men (0.7%).
- In 2015 or 2016, trans and gender diverse students (1.7%) were more likely than men (0.7%) to be sexually assaulted in a 'university setting', but less likely than women (2.3%).
- In 2015 or 2016, women (12%) were four times more likely than men (3%) to be sexually assaulted at a residential college or university residence.

### **Sexual orientation**

- In 2015 or 2016, students who identified as bisexual (3.8%) or heterosexual (1.5%) were more likely to have been sexually assaulted in a 'university setting' than students who identified as gay, lesbian or homosexual (1.4%).

### **Undergraduate and postgraduate**

- In 2016, undergraduates (1.9%) were more likely than postgraduates (0.8%) to be sexually assaulted in a 'university setting'.

### **International and domestic**

- In 2015 or 2016, domestic students (1.7%) were more likely than international students (1.4%) to have been sexually assaulted in a 'university setting'.

### **Cultural diversity**

- No significant differences

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander**

- In 2015 or 2016, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (3.3%) were more likely than those who did not identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (1.6%) to have been sexually assaulted in a 'university setting'.

### **Disability**

- In 2015 or 2016, students with a disability (3.9%) were more likely than students without a disability (1.5%) to be sexually assaulted in a 'university setting'.

### **Commencing and continuing**

- In 2016, continuing students (2%) were more likely than commencing students (1.1%) to have been sexually assaulted in a 'university setting'.

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## **PERPETRATORS**

### **Known**

- In 2015 or 2016, over half of students who were sexually assaulted in a 'university setting' knew all of the perpetrators in the most recent incident.
- Of those students who knew the perpetrator, more than half said the perpetrator was a student from their university.
- 18% of sexual assaults were perpetrated by a student from the victim's place of residence.

### **Unknown**

- In 2015 or 2016, 30% of sexual assaults were perpetrated by a stranger.

### **Number of perpetrators**

- In 2015 or 2016, 64% of all students who were sexually assaulted in a 'university setting' were assaulted by a single perpetrator.
- 68% of women and 47% of men who were sexually assaulted were assaulted by a single perpetrator.

### **Gender of perpetrator**

- In 2015 or 2016, the majority of perpetrators of sexual assault in a 'university setting' were men only (83%), followed equally by women and men perpetrators (6%) and women only perpetrators (6%).
- 92% of sexual assaults of women were perpetrated by men only.
- 41% of sexual assaults of men were perpetrated by men only.

## **BYSTANDERS**

- 1.1% of students witnessed another student being sexually assaulted in a 'university setting'.
- 37% of students who saw another student being sexually assaulted took action.
- Most common forms of action were:
  - » Talking to the victim (77%)
  - » Talking to the offender (50%)
  - » Spoke to someone outside the university about what to do (20%)
  - » Other (20%)
  - » Spoke to someone at the university about what to do (16%)
  - » Reported it to the university (12%)
- Most common reasons for not taking action included:
  - » Didn't know what to do (34%)

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- » Didn't think it was serious enough to intervene (28%)
- » Victim asked them not to take any action (27%)
- » Witness knew other people were helping the victim (25%)

**REPORTING TO UNIVERSITIES**

- In 2015 or 2016, 9% of students who were sexually assaulted in a 'university setting' made a formal report or complaint to anyone in their university.
- Of this 9% who made a report:
  - » 57% said the university had provided an explanation of the reporting process
  - » 32% said the university did not provide an explanation
  - » 11% were unsure
- Of this 9% who made a report:
  - » 23% were very satisfied with the reporting process
  - » 32% were satisfied
  - » 18% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  - » 12% were dissatisfied
  - » 15% were very dissatisfied
- Women (10%) were more likely than men (4%) to have made a formal report about the most recent incident.
- Domestic students (9%) were more likely than international students (5%) to have made a formal report about the most recent incident.
- International students (31%) more likely than domestic students (19%) to feel too embarrassed or ashamed to report the most recent incident of sexual assault to their university.
- Of all students who reported the most recent incident of sexual assault to their university, 43% of these incidents were reported to the police and 41% were not reported to police.
- The most common reasons for not reporting to the university were:
  - » Did not think their experience was serious enough (40%)
  - » Did not think they needed help (40%)
  - » Thought it would be too hard to prove (28%)
  - » Did not know who could who to report to (25%)
  - » Worried wouldn't be believed (22%)
  - » Felt embarrassed or ashamed (21%)

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**SEEKING SUPPORT**

- 14% of students who were sexually assaulted sought support from their university.
- The three most common places in universities students accessed for support were:
  - » Student support services (56%)
  - » Someone who is responsible for the welfare of students at college, dorm or hall (48%)
  - » Campus security (19%)
- Of the 14% of students who sought support from within their university, over half were either very satisfied or satisfied with the support they received for most sources of support, with the exception of the support types 'Someone from my faculty or school' and 'some other university employee'.
- International students (18%) were more likely than domestic students (13%) to seek support from university in relation to most recent incident of sexual assault.
- Commencing students (20%) were more likely than continuing students (12%) to seek support from their university after most recent incident of sexual assault.

**External support**

- 36% of students who were sexually assaulted sought help from outside the university for the most recent incident.
- Women were more likely than men to seek external support for the most recent incident.
- The most common external places sought for support were:
  - » Friend (74%)
  - » Family (32%)
  - » Mental health professional (26%)
  - » Fellow student (23%)
  - » Police (23%)
- Women (25%) were more likely than men (12%) to seek support from police after the most recent incident.
- The most common reasons for not seeking support from the university were:
  - » Did not think their experience was serious enough (40%)
  - » Did not think they needed help (40%)
  - » Thought it would be too hard to prove (28%)
  - » Did not know who could provide support or assistance (25%)
  - » Felt embarrassed or ashamed (21%)

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**KNOWLEDGE OF UNIVERSITY POLICIES, SUPPORT SERVICES AND REPORTING PROCEDURES ON SEXUAL ASSAULT**

- Of all students surveyed on where to go to make a complaint:
  - » 26% had no knowledge
  - » 36% had little knowledge
  - » 30% had some knowledge
  - » 6% had a lot of knowledge
  - » 2% had full knowledge
- Of all students surveyed on where to seek support and assistance:
  - » 22% had no knowledge
  - » 35% had little knowledge
  - » 34% had some knowledge
  - » 7% had a lot of knowledge
  - » 2% had full knowledge
- Of all students surveyed on university policy:
  - » 22% had no knowledge
  - » 32% had little knowledge
  - » 34% had some knowledge
  - » 9% had a lot of knowledge
  - » 3% had full knowledge