

College Row Cultural Review Task Force

2020 Report



THE UNIVERSITY OF
**WESTERN
AUSTRALIA**

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Background

The College Row Cultural Review Taskforce (the Taskforce) was convened in 2019 following the release of the Report on the College Row Cultural Review 2018 (the Report) (**Annexure 1**).

The Report makes eight primary recommendations for consideration by The University of Western Australia (UWA) and the five residential colleges located on 'College Row' at UWA (the Colleges).

Pursuant to the Terms of Reference (**Annexure 2**) the role of the Taskforce is to:

- Develop a plan for the implementation of the eight recommendations for reform identified in the Report, with appropriate project leads and timelines;
- Oversee the implementation of the eight recommendations;
- Report any suggested actions associated with each recommendation area;
- Ensure consistent reporting and tracking of progress to the UWA Colleges Working Group and the UWA Safer Communities Working Group;
- Enhance collaboration between the five residential colleges and The University of Western Australia, for the benefit of the students and wider University Community.

The Taskforce is chaired by the Associate Director, Success and Wellbeing Student Life. Membership comprises the Deputy Heads of College and Representatives from UWA Student Life, Integrity and Standards Unit and the Student Guild. The Executive Officer is the Health Promotion Coordinator, Student Life.

The Taskforce met for the first time on 12 December 2019, and subsequently in January, July, and October in 2020. While progress on the implementation of the recommendations continued, it was impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. The Minutes and Action Register for the final meeting of 2020 are attached (**Annexure 3**).

Executive Summary

The Chair acknowledges the collegiate and cooperative nature in which all College, Student and UWA representatives worked together in 2020, despite the challenges of COVID 19, to ensure that the work of the Review continued to progress. The Taskforce extends its thanks to Trinity College for their hospitality in holding the meetings. The Chair also thanks Mx Kasey Hartung for her extensive work as Executive Officer.

The majority of recommendations and suggested actions have been endorsed and implemented by all Colleges, or are reflective of the ongoing nature of the recommendations, such as annual training and review. A summary and detailed table of the action plan is attached (**Annexure 4**).

The most significant piece of work for the Taskforce for 2020 was the development of an agreed template for a Sexual Misconduct Policy that whilst adaptable for use by each College, provides the basis for a consistent approach across College Row (Recommendation 2) (**Annexure 5**). The precedent for the template was the *Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures*, Colleges

University of Melbourne (2019), adapted with their permission. It is noted that as University Hall is owned by UWA, the University's policies in relation to Sexual Misconduct apply.

The only suggested action *not endorsed* was in relation to Recommendation 3 and the Response to Sexual Misconduct: 3.3 *The Colleges work in partnership to develop a protocol for the reaccommodating of Residents who have been involved in an alleged or substantiated incident of sexual misconduct*. The Taskforce was advised that the Colleges would continue to manage these situations on a case-by-case basis.

Again in relation to Recommendation 3 (repeated in Recommendation 5 Support Services), whilst the Colleges acknowledged that the appointment of a dedicated qualified counsellor was something to aspire to, for most it was either not feasible or not consistent with current student care/welfare structures. Trinity College employs a qualified counsellor as part of their student wellbeing services.

A number of the suggested actions at Recommendation Eight (Broader Institutional Reform relating to policy and procedural review at UWA) remain outstanding for various reasons, including the University's own review of its policy framework and settings. Further detail is provided below.

Recommendation One: Leadership and Governance

The display of committed, proactive and trusted leadership to continue building a value-driven culture that is focused on reducing the risk of sexual misconduct and improving the College experience for Residents.

The suggested actions were endorsed and implemented by all Colleges. All Colleges have a College Row Cultural Review 2018 Response Plan. Some suggested actions were not applicable, for example not all Colleges have Residents' Clubs. Others are ongoing in nature.

The suggestion regarding the composition of the selection panel for Residential Leadership roles was accepted in principle, with some Colleges noting limitations regarding the appointment of an external representative.

Recommendation Two: Policy

A collaborative review and redevelopment of policy to achieve: greater alignment of policy content across College Row and with The University of Western Australia while countenancing for the issues unique to each setting; and content that reflects an evidence-based best practice approach.

All Colleges have, or are in the process of implementing, stand-alone policies and procedures relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination, alcohol and other drugs, and a process for dissemination, review and training.

As noted above, a template for a Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure for contextualisation and use by each College, based on the policy of the Colleges of the University of Melbourne,

was agreed by the Taskforce. It is noted that as University Hall is owned by UWA, the University's policies in relation to Sexual Misconduct apply.

Recommendation Three: Response to Sexual Misconduct

The development and implementation of a clear, coherent, efficient and transparent system for the receipt, investigation and management of sexual misconduct disclosures and complaints

Procedures for the receipt, investigation and management of sexual misconduct disclosures and reporting was incorporated into the template policy referred to in Recommendation 2.

Whilst the employment of a specialist counsellor was supported in principle, this is not operationally feasible for all Colleges. Trinity College is the only College to have a designated counsellor position. Some members expressed the hope that the recent UWA Health Services Delivery Review might address this issue, however the provision of a dedicated UWA counsellor for College Row is beyond the scope of the recommendations of that Review.

The Colleges did not endorse the recommendation for the development of a protocol for the reaccommodating of Residents who have been involved in an alleged or substantiated incident of sexual misconduct.

Recommendation Four: Education and Training

The provision of a comprehensive, regular and interactive suite of training programs to:

- reinforce College values and behavioural expectations;
- convey policies and procedures;
- advise of the consequences of sexual misconduct;
- identify risks and harm minimisation strategies; and
- provide information about support services.

Each College has a comprehensive training program for Residents, Student Leaders and Staff, supported by UWA Student Life and UWA Human Resources for University Hall.

The development of a dedicated webpage and the dissemination of information continues to progress.

Recommendation Five: Support Services

An increase in awareness of referral pathways and the provision of high quality and timely psychological, medical and academic support services to those affected by sexual misconduct.

As noted above, the employment of a dedicated counsellor in a stand-alone role, whilst endorsed, is not viable for all Colleges. Trinity College is the only College to have a dedicated position.

Vicarious trauma support services and referral pathways are available for UWA staff and students and include crisis intervention, immediate and longer term support from clinical psychologists, counsellors and welfare officers through UWA Medical Centre, CAPS, Student Welfare, Student Assist, EAP services, and the Robin Winkler Clinic. The UWA Medical Centre is accessible to all College Row Residents. In the event of a traumatic event occurring on College Row, support services are regularly extended to Residents, including non UWA students and staff. Colleges also rely on external third parties as required.

Recommendation Six: Event Planning and Management

The continued development and implementation of an event planning and management resource package and complementary training program for delivery in College Row.

The recommendations were endorsed and implemented by all Colleges with the following exceptions:

6.4 College-approved Event Management Plans for major events be submitted to Campus Operations at The University of Western Australia to advise of the event and any security implications, was not endorsed by Trinity College. Other Colleges advise Security are notified when major events occur;

6.7 At least one senior College staff member attend all College-organised events (held on and off the College premise) was not endorsed in its entirety. Colleges have in place processes to ensure safety and care is taken at all College events, for example the presence of senior RAs.

Recommendation Seven: Safety and Security

An increased commitment to protecting and maximising the safety and security of all College Row Residents, staff and affiliates.

All recommendations and suggested actions were endorsed and implemented by all Colleges.

Recommendation Eight: Broader Institutional Reform

A commitment from The University of Western Australia to review and strengthen policy and process, and to work in partnership with College Row to reduce the risk of sexual misconduct and maximise student health and wellbeing

The recommendations and suggested actions were endorsed by UWA, although a number remain outstanding. In summary:

- A strategic working group has been convened (UWA Colleges Working Group) to consider the findings and use them as a basis for planning and enacting a more cohesive approach to preventing, responding to and managing sexual misconduct. The Taskforce has responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the agreed actions;

- The recommended Affiliation Agreements between the University and College Row remain under discussion with the UWA Colleges Working Group;
- Whilst a procedural framework for the disclosure, reporting (including anonymous reporting), investigation, and support processes has been agreed in the common template, the recommendation regarding sharing of information through a common database, data collection and collective reporting is outstanding. Further advice in this regard will be sought in the first quarter of 2021;
- UWA is currently reviewing and updating its policy framework, policies and procedures relating to the recommendations in the Report. It is anticipated that this will be resolved by Q2 2021;
- Relevant training for staff and students is currently under review for updating following the cessation of the Epigeum license in March 2021, with consideration being given to the University Australia modules or a bespoke WA University module, led by Curtin University;
- Discussions between UWA Security (and Wilsons) continue on a separate basis with the individual Colleges;
- UWA Security have undertaken that all relevant front-line staff will have undergone MHFA training and SARC Responding to Disclosures training by the commencement of semester 1 2021- for review;
- Event Management procedures at the University will be identified for review in light of recommendation 8.21 for response in Q2 2021.

Recommended next steps for approval

The following actions are recommended for 2021:

- In line with recommendation 8.9, The University of Western Australia and the Colleges develop a communication plan with the assistance of Student Life and Marketing to advise staff and students/residents of the progress so far, in particular the disclosure/reporting framework and support available;
- The Taskforce be suspended, reconvening in semester 2, 2021 to review the implementation of the agreed template and procedural framework and any other outstanding items;
- UWA Student Life, through the Manager, Student Welfare and the Senior Health Promotion Officer, Inclusion, work with the Office of Integrity and Standards to progress Recommendation Eight and in particular in relation to advice regarding the sharing of information, use of a common database and the increased provision of training.
- The Chair liaise with the UWA Events Manager, BMR to progress consideration of recommendation 8.21;
- The suggested training requirements for UWA Security be monitored through the Safer Communities Working Group; and
- The UWA Colleges Working Group consider the progression of the Affiliation Agreements between UWA and College Row.

Lisa Goldacre

Chair, *College Row Cultural Review Taskforce*

Associate Director, Success and Wellbeing | Student Life