

University of Limerick Action Plan to Tackle Sexual Violence, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment

Relevant Consent Framework Outcome	Action No.	Action	Progress to Date/ Milestones achieved	Person Responsible	Timeframe (start/end)	Success Indicator
1. Institutional Culture						
<i>A member of HEI senior management team will have responsibility for the implementation of the Framework.</i>	#1	A key member of the institution's management team to be assigned responsibility for the implementation of the Consent Framework.	The Provost and Deputy President of the University has been assigned responsibility for the implementation of the Consent Framework Steering committee and is the chairperson of the Framework Steering Committee (FSG).	Provost	From November 2020 - Quarterly meetings	Meetings held and key responsibilities assigned. Key targets for the implementation of the framework in place.
			The FSG to report on a quarterly basis to the Executive Committee (EC)	Provost	Quarterly Updates	Progress noted and where necessary resources provided to ensure full implementation of the Framework.

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<p><i>HEIs will establish an Institutional Working Group to coordinate Framework implementation. This will be comprised of key stakeholders including academics, support services, administration, and student's unions, and will ensure due regard to balanced representation, in particular representation of groups at particular risk of experiencing sexual violence and harassment; women, those with disabilities, ethnic minorities and LGBT+.</i></p>	#2	<p>To ensure the effective implementation of the key outcomes of the Consent Framework a Framework Steering Group (FSG) charged with delivery of the outcomes of the Framework to be established. The membership to be reflective of those functional areas within the University with responsibility for framework related matters and to be reflective of key stakeholders.</p>	<p>The FSG has been established. Membership of the FSG is reflective of key stakeholders including academic, support services, unions (staff and student) and those with responsibility for framework related matters.</p> <p>To support the implementation of the framework 2 working groups are in place;</p>	Provost	From Jan 2021 – Bi-monthly	<p>The formal structure for the FSG in place. Bi-monthly meetings taking place. Quarterly reports to Executive Committee.</p> <p>Annual Project Plan agreed.</p>
			<p>1. Policy Development Group (PDG)</p> <p>2. Sexual Health and Wellbeing Group (SHWG)</p>	<p>Chair PDG</p> <p>Chair SHWG</p>	<p>Feb 2021 Dec 2021</p> <p>Bi-monthly meetings</p>	<p>Subgroups in place involving key Stakeholders. Project Plan for the review and development of Student & Staff policies agreed including the Dignity & Respect Policies (Staff & Students); Sexual Violence, Sexual Misconduct & Sexual Harassment Policy; Handling Disclosure Procedures. SHW Policy in place. Training Plan in place.</p>

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<i>Liaison and partnership with external specialist agencies to ensure effective engagement with external structures.</i>	#3	Involvement of key stakeholders on key implementation and policy development teams.	The Limerick Rape Crisis Centre is represented on our Healthy UL SHWB Group. Links have also been established with SATU (Nationally and in Galway). The Head, Equality & Diversity represents UL on the National Advisory Committee of the National Women’s Council and the NAC Policy Development Group.	Chair SHWG	In place and on-going	Policies and education and training are informed by external specialist/key stakeholder input.

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2. Institutional Processes: Recording						
<i>HEIs will create an easy to use system for students and staff to disclose and report incidents, which would be reflected in a high level of awareness and understanding among both students and staff.</i>	#4	The newly developed policy for staff and student will have a clearly outlined pathway to disclose and report incidents.	An initial meeting of key stakeholders has been held to discuss the process for reviewing current policies and the requirement to develop additional policies in line with the Framework.	Chair – PDW	October 2020	A clear pathway for reporting incidents has been set out in all related policies.
		An anonymous report and support system in place tracking sexual misconduct, sexual harassment and all other forms of unacceptable behaviour including racism, homophobia etc. on campus.	All policies developed in UL are subject to the procedures laid out in UL’s Policy Management Framework. For each policy clear lines of responsibility are indicated and where appropriate reporting.		Annually	An annual survey conducted to gather feedback on the effectiveness of the policies/procedures.
			UL has purchased the license for the Anonymous Report and Support system and is waiting to commission the system subject to legal clearance.		From April 2021 - Annually	An annual analysis of all reported incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape and data collected through the anonymous report and support tool will be undertaken and reported to EC & GA.

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<i>The reporting system is compatible with reporting party/survivor rights, cognisant of the needs of vulnerable groups, and has the confidence of the higher education community.</i>	#5	Ensure that the revised/newly developed policies clearly set out the reporting pathway cognisant of and fully compatible with and informed by party/survivor's rights and in line with best practice HE guidelines.	Over the past number of years there has been a focus, not only on continuing to provide a safe environment for all our students and staff, but also on putting supports in place to encourage victims of any kind of discriminatory or abusive behaviour (including sexual assault or harassment) to make an official report. All steps will be clearly outlined in the revised procedures.	Chair PDG	March 2021 – December 2021 (on-going)	The reporting system set out in the relevant policies is fully compatible and informed by reporting party/survivors rights
<i>Institutions shall record statistics on harassment, assault, and rape and report them in the context of their strategic dialogue with the HEA.</i>	#6	The newly developed and revised policies to clearly outline reporting procedures. The institution commits to recording all reported incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape in the context of our strategic dialogue. Education & training to be provided to address any concerns staff or students have in reporting incidents.	The University currently reports statistics on harassment, assault up to and including rape. However, we are conscious that not all incidents are reported to us in the first instance. It is the intention that once policies have been reviewed and new policies developed to ensure that the steps for reporting are clearly outlined and communicated.	Student complaints officer. HR – Employee Relations Officer Director HR-EDI	On-going Annual Report	A clear indication on the number and types of incidents occurring on campus can be provided. Reports monitored and progress tracked. The number of reported incidents will start to reflect what is happening on the ground. All reported incidents will be communicated as part of the strategic dialogue to the HEA.

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3. Institutional Processes: Policy						
<i>Dedicated policies of breadth and depth consistent with the Framework aims referencing IUA/THEA guidelines and policies where appropriate.</i>	#7	All relevant policies to be revised in line with the Consent Framework and cognisant of the IUA/THEA guidelines	<p>Stage 1 – a review of current policies</p> <p>Stage 2 – development of new dedicated policies</p> <p>Stage 3 – Communications Plan Education and Training Programme</p>	<p>Chair PDG</p> <p>FSG- PDG</p>	<p>March 2021 – June 2021</p> <p>March 2021 – December 2021</p> <p>By Dec 2021</p>	Policies fully consistent with Framework aims and IUA/Thea Guidelines
<i>Policies are explicitly linked to clear lines of responsibility, active responses, institutional reporting, and regular review.</i>	#8	Policies to clearly set out lines of responsibility and clear pathways for reporting. All policies developed in UL are subject to the procedures laid out in UL's Policy Management Framework. All policies are subject to regular review.	<p>All relevant policies have been identified.</p> <p>Policy Development Group (PDG) a sub-group of the FSG to agree a project plan for review/development of relevant policies.</p>	Chair PDG	<p>March 2021</p> <p>April 2021</p>	Policies approved by all key stakeholders. Education & Training plans agreed for staff and students to support the clear communication of the policies, roles of responsibility and clear reporting pathways.

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<i>Policies include guidelines for addressing student complaints, including transparency for all involved.</i>	#9	The current policies clearly outline the guidelines for addressing student complaints. The revised policies will further clearly set out the steps to be followed and the supports available to students and staff should they experience any form of inappropriate behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct up to and including rape.	Revised policies to include clear pathways for addressing student & staff complaints.	Provost - Chair FSG Chair PDG	Review by June 2021 New policy development by Dec 2021	Policies approved and in operation. Staff and Student Surveys to be conducted annually to track levels of satisfaction with regard to whether policy guidelines are understood, are transparent and the feedback indicates that students & staff are confident that their complaint would be dealt with efficiently should they make a complaint.

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<i>Policy implementation is supported by compiling relevant information, leadership of high level HEI officer, and through the appropriate structures, an annual report on institutional initiatives and data to the Governing Authority.</i>	#10	An annual report to be presented to the GA clearly setting out the number of reported incidents, the education and communications strategy; campaigns undertaken and staff & student survey data related to feedback on D&R, Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence.	UL has a history of participating and supporting the development of policy in this arena: besides representation on the NAC, UL has also for example, contributed to the ESHTe project - Ending Sexual Harassment and Violence in Third-level Education - led by the National Women's Council. The It Stops Now Campaign was supported by the institution. In 2019 a ground-breaking and award-winning LGBT+ public education and awareness campaign - ' Call It Out '- was jointly rolled out by the University of Limerick's Hate and Hostility Research Group and the Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI).	Provost- Chair FSG Chair PDG Director HR-EDI	Annually	Annual survey reports show an increase in the satisfaction levels from staff and students on clear reporting processes.

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4. Targeted Initiatives						
<i>HEIs will provide direct student-facing activities including workshop/classes that promote an understanding of consent; student understanding and skills for speaking up and calling out unacceptable behaviour.</i>	#11	Active*Consent Workshop to be delivered to all first-year students. The plan for Semester 1 2021-22 is through the support of Academic Registry to ensure Active*Consent Training is scheduled on Orientation Week for all 1 st Year Under Grad Students approx. 3,200.	In 2020 UL delivered Active*Consent Workshops to 750 students. This was a significant increase to the face-to-face Consent Training delivered in 2019.	SHWB Group in collaboration with Student Life Officers	Sept 2021	Target - 70% of all first-year students attend Active*Consent Training on Orientation Week in Semester 1 2021-22
		A Designated Contact Panel (DCP) similar to what is available to staff to be considered for students.	Dignity & Respect Training is mandatory for all UL Staff. A register of attendance is reported annually.	Head, Learning & Development	Annually	Completed of Dignity & Respect Training tracked for all staff.
		The on-line Bystander Training Programme to be reviewed and considered for Y2.	UL operates a Designated Contacts Person Panel to support staff with individual issues related to Bullying and Harassment. These meetings are strictly confidential and discussions protected from reporting. Programme content reviewed.	PDG		Contact Persons Panel considered for students and implemented if agreed by the PDG. Training Provided.
		Handling Disclosure Training to be delivered to key identified staff who are likely to handle disclosure incidents.	Handling Disclosure Training (April 2021)			The on-line Bystander Training programme available to staff and students. Handling disclosures - Training completed by all relevant personnel.

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<i>Ongoing messaging to disseminate information consistent with the Framework aims for cultural change and awareness.</i>	#12	<p>Driving cultural change initiatives in support of the Consent Framework will be a key priority for the newly appointed Director Human Rights - EDI.</p> <p>In addition, UL is in the process of recruiting a Consent Framework facilitator. The facilitator will be responsible for agreeing a plan for disseminating information on the framework in collaboration with Student Life Officers.</p>	<p>UL has many support structures in place for any student who is seeking assistance from our UL Student Life Officers to our Chaplaincy Office, our Counselling and Health services, course leaders and peers. UL has installed six dedicated emergency call point pillars at locations around the campus. They come with built-in strobe lights and in the event of the call button being pushed, the caller will be immediately connected with a member of the Campus Security Control Room. Emergency Beacons are a familiar sight on campuses across the world and have been found to promote a feeling of security and safety among university communities.</p> <p>A communication strategy to engage students in the workshops and their responsibility overall in relation to 'Consent' was undertaken in October 2020. The Student Life VP Welfare issued a video call to male students to undertake the facilitator training</p>	<p>Director HR- EDI</p> <p>Consent Framework Facilitator.</p> <p>Student Life Officers</p> <p>Buildings & Estates/Security</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Clear transparent messages disseminated on a regular basis driving a cultural change throughout the institution.</p> <p>Survey data gathered.</p> <p>A campaign to engage male students in place.</p>

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<i>HEIs will create and implement an education plan to ensure all staff and relevant students have at least a minimal agreed understanding and capacity to support students; create and implement a training plan for staff and students who contribute to initiatives and services.</i>	#13	A full education and training plan to be agreed for students and staff to support the roll out of the revised policies. Training to include Active*Consent; Handling Disclosures; Dignity & Respect Training and on-line Bystander Training etc.	<p>The Healthy UL initiative has a comprehensive Communications Plan which is aligned to a calendar of national and international health promotion events and initiatives. Some of these relate specifically to Sexual Health and Wellbeing and all messaging is disseminated widely through Healthy UL website, twitter and YouTube mechanisms.</p> <p>Active*Consent Training was delivered in 2020.</p> <p>Dignity & Respect training is mandatory for all UL Staff</p> <p>It Stops Now Campaign is facilitated in UL as part of SHAG (Sexual Health and Guidance Week) and this project works as an integral part of the ESHTe project – the central themes of which are currently highlighted under the Sexual Health and Wellbeing section of the Healthy UL webpage. https://www.ul.ie/about-ul/healthy-ul and https://www.itstopsnow.org/en/home</p>	<p>Provost AVP Student Engagement (AVP- SE) Director HR-EDI Head – Training & Development Student Life Officers</p> <p>Provost AVP SE Director HR-EDI Head – Learning & Development Student Life Officers</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>Academic Year</p>	<p>A comprehensive education and training Plan in place.</p> <p>A comprehensive schedule of education and training programmes and events for staff and students published annually on the UL Website and promoted directly through Student Life Social Media Sites; HR Website; HR Learning & Development Schedules etc.</p> <p>A comprehensive communications plan in place.</p> <p>Survey analysis indicates satisfaction that clear reporting pathways have been set out in policies covering staff and students.</p>

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<i>HEIs will create and implement a system for measuring effectiveness of initiatives.</i>	#14	Feedback on the effectiveness of initiatives to be gathered through a number of mechanisms including on-line tools such as Slido; annual D&R surveys for staff and students.	The Report and Support Reporting Tool will capture broad level data to inform potential areas for attention/development. Healthy UL is committed to an extensive research agenda. Longitudinal studies of student sexual health behaviours are underway and will help to identify initiatives that prove most effective.	Framework co-ordinator. Director HR_EDI. Provost	AY21/22	Key metrics identified. Operational system developed and piloted. Feedback loops identified. Dissemination and actions specified.

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<i>HEIs will provide accessible, trauma-informed services; for supporting student disclosure, reporting and complaints, and for counselling and advocacy</i>	#15	A trauma informed service is in place to support students and staff with disclosures with counselling and advocacy services.	The Student Health and Wellness Centre provides excellent support and advice to students through its Health Centre, Éist Student Counselling and Wellbeing and Chaplaincy Services, more information available at: https://ulsites.ul.ie/studentaffairs/student-health-and-wellness UL provides sexual health education programmes, sexual health screening programmes, and UL SHAG (Sexual Health and Guidance Week) is facilitated by UL Student Life every year. The SHWB Group is advocating for the opening of a SATU (sexual assault treatment unit) in Limerick University Hospital and a plan to develop a campaign for this objective will be developed in the coming year.	Student Health and Wellness Centre	On-going	Survey data indicates that students and staff are aware of the services available to them. Annual statistics are available.
		Monitor usage of the service		Éist Counselling Services	On-going	
<i>HEIs will provide accessible, trauma-informed services; for supporting student disclosure, reporting and complaints, and for counselling and advocacy</i>	#15	Trauma informed services in place.	UL will ensure that staff in the Health Centre, Éist (Student Counselling Services) and all other relevant student related contact services personnel will undertake trauma informed training.	Health Centre Éist	Training for key	Trauma informed training undertaken by all key related personnel.

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Glossary:

Title	
AVPSE	Associate Vice President Student Engagement
AR	Academic Registry
Director HR-EDI	Director Human Rights – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
PDG	Policy Development Group
SHWG	Sexual Health and Wellbeing Group