

Building a Safer Community at CDU

Strategic Framework

Student Engagement and Success

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Recognition of Traditional owners and Indigenous cultures

Charles Darwin University acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we're meeting and pays respect to Elders both past and present and extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This includes the Larrakia people where the main Darwin campus is located, along with our campuses on lands of the Arrernte of Alice Springs, the Jawoyn, Wardaman and Dagomon of Katherine, the Warumungu of Tennant Creek, and our interstate campuses on lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation of Sydney and the Kulin Nation of Melbourne.

CDU also acknowledges its footprint is on the lands of many nations of Aboriginal custodians including the Kungarakan people of Batchelor and Adelaide River, Yolngu of northeast Arnhemland, and the Tiwi people.



Safer Communities: content note

This pack contains references to:

- sexual harassment and assault and other forms of gender-based violence,
- oppressive systems including racism, sexism, transphobia and homophobia, and
- the prevalence of mental ill health, particularly amongst young people, including suicide.

Support for staff is available from:

- CDU's Employee Assistance Program, Assure <https://assureprograms.com.au>
- Lifeline <https://www.lifeline.org.au>
- 1800 RESPECT <https://www.1800respect.org.au>
- NT SARC: <https://nt.gov.au/wellbeing/hospitals-health-services/sexual-assault-referral-centres>
- Well Mob <https://wellmob.org.au>
- Qlife <https://qlife.org.au>

Safer Communities: external context



The #metoo movement went viral in 2017, providing a platform for people to share stories of sexual harassment and assault. Translated across countries, the movement renewed focus on ending gender-based violence.



At the same time, Universities Australia and the Australian Human Rights Commission launched the Respect.Now.Always campaign and survey, aiming to prevent sexual violence in university communities and improve responses.



From 2013, #blacklivesmatter highlighted systematic racism in the (US) police and called for an end to police brutality. This modern day civil rights campaign has become a global call for the end of race-based bias and violence.



Australia has acknowledged a crisis in youth mental health, with suicide as the leading cause of death amongst people aged 5-17, and about 75% of common mental health problems emerging before the age of 25.

Safer Communities: internal context

In response to the Respect.Now.Always national campaign, CDU formed an RNA Committee to improve how the University was preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual violence within the University community. This included addressing gaps in services, providing staff and students with consent and bystander education, and improving policies and procedures.

Over the last 18 months, the University has renewed its focus on diversity and inclusion, specifically:

- Gender equality, with the launch of Women@CDU
 - LGBTQIA+ staff and students, with the launch of an Ally Network and Pride group
 - Indigenous staff and students, with the new Indigenous Leadership Strategy, and
- These are further supported by a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and new codes of conduct.

Despite progress, there is much work to do to improve CDU community safety, with a vulnerable student population (particularly international students) and continued presentation of complex behaviour in online and face to face classrooms. This framework proposes further action to improving student community safety and wellbeing at CDU.

Safer Communities: strategic framework

The Safer Communities strategic framework pulls together a range of student-focused work that is happening across different teams and Colleges under four pillars:

- **Behaviour Management:** early identification of students with concerning or threatening behaviour and interventions to ensure their safety and the safety of other staff and students.
- **Respect Now Always:** prevention of and response to gender-based violence including sexual harassment, sexual assault and exploitation.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** creating a welcoming environment free from discrimination where a diverse range of students can participate and succeed, and
- **Mental Health:** building resilience and wellbeing amongst the student population.

The framework will complement People and Capability's Staff Wellbeing strategy, and use the *prevention, preparation, response and recovery* principles to better manage risk.

Safer Communities: four pillars

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Identifying students at risk and managing the impact of concerning or threatening behaviour.

- Early interventions
- Threat assessment
- Risk management
- Case management

Outcome:

- Threats to safety are known and managed
- Students receive specialist support

RESPECT.NOW.ALWAYS

Preventing gender-based violence and improving the CDU response to sexual assault or harassment.

- Consent culture
- Gender equality
- Alcohol & other drugs
- Case management

Outcome:

- Zero tolerance of gender-based violence
- Survivor-centred response and recovery

DIVERSITY and INCLUSION

Ensuring all students can participate and succeed in a welcoming environment free from discrimination.

- Student representation
- Ally programs
- Inclusive language
- Inclusive practice

Outcome:

- A culture of belonging and active citizenship
- Inclusive curriculum and assessment design

MENTAL HEALTH

Building resilience and connection, with physical, emotional, financial and spiritual wellbeing.

- Proactive support
- Community connection
- Skill building
- Suicide prevention

Outcome:

- Reduction in self-harming behaviours
- Improved coping skills and success rates

ENABLERS

Effective policies, work practices, record-keeping, systems and decision-making. Cross-org collaboration. Staff awareness and training.

Safer Communities: immediate priorities and actions

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

- Training for academics and front line staff in managing student behaviour
- Code Black training for key staff
- Processes for escalation of concerning or threatening behaviour
- Establishment of a cross-university threat management group
- Identification of external expertise
- New Code of Conduct
- Case management/ records system

RESPECT.NOW.ALWAYS

- 2021 national survey
- Online reporting tool
- Recruitment and training of Contact Officers
- Review of consent materials and roll out of fresh resources
- Creation of resources for responsible use of alcohol & other drugs
- Development of case management procedures
- Articulation of zero tolerance stance in practice
- Focus on IHD and other residential settings

DIVERSITY and INCLUSION

- Collaboration with the CDU Student Council to create a student diversity council
- Support for the CDU LGBTQIA+ Ally and Pride programs
- Contribution to the CDU Reconciliation Action Plan
- Development of a Disability Action Plan
- Development of inclusive language resources and guides
- Capturing and showcasing examples of inclusive best practice

MENTAL HEALTH

- Improved range of student services online and on campus, including chaplaincy, sexual health and budgeting/finance
- Campus activation at all sites, building a strong community
- Development of an international student support plan
- Rollout of the suicide prevention toolkit
- Strategic partnerships with key community/ health partners

Safer Communities

Safer Communities actions are intended to create a safer and more connected University community and will rely on a strong University culture of zero tolerance for unsafe behaviour.

The Safer Communities program is managed within SES in partnership with:

- People and Capability, including Health, Safety and Environment,
- Property and Facilities, including Security,
- International House Darwin and Alice Springs accommodation, and
- College teams.

Longer term, we will aim for accreditation with:

- [Australian Safe Communities Foundation](#), part of the [Pan Pacific Safe Communities Network](#)
- [Rainbow Tick](#), a world-first quality framework to help organisations become safe and inclusive for the LGBTIQ community