

1. Background

This report provides the Audit and Risk Management Committee a biannual update on sexual violence data and sector updates for the Q1 and Q2 reporting period (January- June 2024).

2. Sexual Violence Data

2.1 Quarterly Comparison Data

Table 1 reports data for Q1 and Q2, 2024. As a benchmark, data from Q1 and Q2, 2023 are also shown. While the data reports a 25% increase in reporting across 2023 and 2024, it should be noted that the data is provided as a snapshot of emerging reporting. The data is not for comparative purposes as reporting across quarters will be impacted by varying factors (for example, number of students on campus at different times of the year). The sexual violence prevention awareness campaign has been active during the Q1 and Q2, 2024 period, and this proactive activity may be a contributing factor of increased reporting.

Table 1. Quarter 1 & 2 Year-on-Year Comparison 2023-2024

Q1 & Q2	2023	2024
Sexual Assault Total	14	16
Sexual Harassment Total	7	11
Total of all reports	21	27

2.2 Quarterly reported sexual violence

There were twenty-seven disclosures of sexual violence (assault and harassment) during Q1 & Q2, 2024 (Table 2), with no disclosures of sexual assault occurring on campus. All reporting students were provided support, referrals, and academic adjustments. UniSC received two formal reports for resolution related to sexual harassment, with one of these students supported to report to QPS (Queensland Police Service). Of these two formal reports, one occurred at a campus location, and one off-campus (student accommodation).

Table 2. Reported sexual violence in Q1 & Q2 2024

	Q1, 2024	Q2, 2024	Total
Sexual Assault Total	4	12	16
At a campus location	0	0	0
Off-campus	3	11	14
Not disclosed	1	1	2
Sexual Harassment Total	3	8	11
At a campus location	1	4	5
Off-campus (incl. student accommodation)	2	3	5
Cyber related ¹	2	2	4
Total of all reports	7	20	27

¹ Cyber related incidents are reported separately and are additionally reported in 'At a campus location' and 'off-Campus' data representing intersectionality.

3. Critical Sector News

In February 2024, the Commonwealth Government released its [Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education](#), building on the [National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children \(2022–2032\)](#). This Plan highlights the role of universities in addressing sexual violence through promoting safe, inclusive learning experiences across all aspects of the student life cycle. Whilst UniSC's SVP Action Plan is aligned with the Government's focus on sexual violence, a sustained effort is required ensure our approach fully implements the recommended measures through a gendered violence lens.

Also in February, the University of New South Wales published a report titled [How Australian Universities are Responding to Campus Sexual Assault](#) providing comparative data on the performance of universities in responding to sexual assault on campus. The data, representing 38 universities, shows UniSC performed better than the sector average in all categories (Table 5). The report notes that more work is needed across the sector in supporting students to make complaints and seek support in relation to sexual violence.

Table 5. Student knowledge of university supports and reporting channels

Categories	UniSC %	Sector Average %
Knew nothing or very little about where to go to make a complaint about sexual harassment	35.5 ¹	49.7
Knew nothing or very little about where to seek support or assistance for sexual harassment	32.2 ¹	45.4
Knew nothing or very little about where to go to make a complaint about sexual assault	38.9 ²	52.3
Knew nothing or very little about where to seek support or assistance for sexual assault	29.7 ³	42.2

¹Ranked best performing

²Ranked 2nd best performing

³Ranked 3rd best performing.

In June 2024, UniSC staff attended the 'Our Watch' conference- *Walking, Talking and Working Together: Taking a whole of university approach to preventing gender-based violence*. The Department of Education outlined new regulatory changes including requiring trauma-informed, survivor-centred practices with a focus on governance and leadership. The conference included discussions on gender-based violence and the role of universities in addressing this critical issue. Calls to action included the need for:

- a pan university primary prevention approach aligned with the [Educating for Equality framework](#)
- increased awareness, improved reporting mechanisms, and integrated intersectionality in all initiatives.
- Culturally informed, strength-based approaches to prevention.
- Universities to adopt proactive, inclusive strategies to create safe and supportive environments.

In June, UniSC consulted on the development of the next Universities Australia (UA) National Student Safety Survey (NSSS) into student experiences of sexual violence every three years (due 2025). Feedback included the need for a consistent set of criteria for data capture and reporting, with a greater degree of nuance, particularly for placement and defining on/off-campus experiences. Consideration was also given to the inclusion of staff and students under the age of 18 in the 2025 survey. Two concurrent surveys are being considered with guidance from the **Fair Work's positive duty on employers to eliminate workplace sex discrimination and harassment**.