

Guidelines for responding to disclosures of sexual harassment



A resource for staff and students in responding to a person who discloses they have been sexually harassed.

It is important to remain compassionate, respectful, and supportive.

01

Attend to Safety

Determine whether there are any immediate risks to the person's wellbeing and safety.

For immediate assistance of police or ambulance call 000 For on-campus security call 1800 675 559

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Listen and be supportive - It can be very hard for someone to disclose sexual harassment. Give the person your full attention. Speak calmly, let them tell you at their own pace, without interrupting or asking direct questions about the experience. Silences are okay. Letting someone take charge of what they disclose also enables them to reclaim some control.

Believe them - Do not ask 'why' questions – these questions carry blame and judgement.

Keep it confidential - It is up to the person to decide who they tell, when and how, and they are trusting you to respect that. Treat what is shared with you confidentially, do not share with others without permission.

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Connect in with Sexual Misconduct Officers

JCU has dedicated Sexual Misconduct Officers who provide a single point of contact either directly to the person who has experienced the harassment or indirectly with you, as the person providing direct support. For more information on responding to Sexual Harassment visit <https://www.jcu.edu.au/safety-and-wellbeing/sexual-harassment>.

The Sexual Misconduct Officers can assist with working out what support a person needs to continue with studying or working. Support may include, for example, safety plans, short-term emergency housing, or changes to class scheduling, assessment, or work reporting lines. Support can be provided without identifying the other person/people involved.

Sexual Misconduct Officers are Chief of Staff - Vanessa Cannon (07) 47814078 | Manager Student Equity and Wellbeing - Larissa Siliezar (07) 47814538 | Damian Dunne, Diversity and Equity Consultant, Human Resources (07) 42321136. Or e: smo@jcu.edu.au

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Addressing the harassment - JCU will act in line with the wishes of the person who has been subjected to sexual harassment. The Sexual Misconduct Officers, with HR Business Partners as required, can discuss options for addressing the harassment. For example, depending on what the person wishes, the options could include:

- Taking no immediate action
- The supervisor or next level manager, or College Dean, resetting expectations about behavior with the other person/people
- The requirement that the other person/people to undertake internally provided training
- An apology being made
- A Complaint being made with the potential for disciplinary action

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Reporting Options

It is possible to make an anonymous Report to JCU, and it is possible to make a Report to JCU without identifying any other person/people involved. Visit www.jcu.edu.au/safety-and-wellbeing/report-an-incident. If you have taken Step 3 or Step 4 above, then the Sexual Misconduct Officers will record a Report of the incident. A Report is not the same thing as making a Complaint.

You can make a report of sexual harassment to the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland at any time. 1300 130670

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Take Care of Yourself

It can be difficult and confronting to support someone impacted by sexual harassment. Students can confidentially debrief by speaking to a counsellor at Student Equity and Wellbeing (Townsville 4781 4711 or Cairns 4232 1150), and staff can call Benestar 1300 360 364. Sexual Misconduct Officers can also provide support.