

Promoting a Respectful Community Culture at La Trobe

Student safety is a key priority at La Trobe University. We are working hard to ensure our campuses are safe places to be – and we will continue to make ongoing safety and security improvements, and actively champion equity, diversity and inclusion. We have made good progress, but there is more to do. In particular, we will do even more to raise awareness about the respectful behaviours we expect of each other here at La Trobe, and in our wider engagement in the community.

Current measures

- **Public commitment to diversity and inclusion:** the University has made public commitments and taken action to promote respectful behaviour across our campuses and wherever La Trobe students and staff might represent the University around the world. The Respect at La Trobe Program and the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy guide our actions. Respect needs to be owned and demonstrated by individuals. By doing this we develop a whole of organisation culture
- **Management and oversight:** the Campus Safety Group and Complex Behaviours Advisory Group coordinate activity and analyse data on the prevalence and nature of anti-social behaviours and violence on campus, proactively identifying and implementing opportunities for improvement and ensuring that our approaches are constantly improving in response to new issues and behaviours. The Campus Safety Group is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor
- **Clear statements of expectation of students and staff:** all students must acknowledge at enrolment they have read, understood, and will abide by the Student Charter and all on-campus residential students must also acknowledge and live by the Rules of Residence. For staff, abiding by the Code of Conduct and the University's other policies is a condition of employment
- **Partnership with students:** the University actively partners with student organisations and the student leaders of clubs and societies to ensure the activities and events they organise both on- and off-campus are managed appropriately and help foster a safe and inclusive community. Our Student Representative Councils provide open forums for discussion of matters of concern to students. We also partner with external agencies such as the Northern Centre Against Sexual Assault to jointly deliver services and support
- **Policy and procedure:** a range of policy and procedure statements address some of the drivers of anti-social behaviours, such as the Alcohol and Drugs Policy and Procedure which implements the responsible service of alcohol across our campuses. The General Misconduct Statute and staff disciplinary procedures outline the requirements for investigation of, and action on, complaints and disciplinary action where required. The University has processes in place to assess and manage the risk of on-campus activities and events
- **Speak Up** supports students and staff in relation to intimidation, harassment, discrimination, all forms of violence (including sexual and physical assault), and other forms of unacceptable behaviour. The University offers a 24 hour hotline for students and staff affected by violence
- **Counselling** is available on all campuses for students and staff, including after-hours access. The University also has an active partnership with the Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault

- **Support services:** the University has an array of support services and academic support mechanisms for students with specific needs. This includes students with a disability, LGBTI people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, international students and graduate research students
- **Case management of complaints:** the University works closely with complainants and respondents to ensure all reports are fully investigated, and the appropriate support provided and action taken. Disciplinary action is instigated promptly when required
- **Awareness and education:** the University undertakes a range of actions to raise awareness of respect including:
 - a social media campaign targeting students via Facebook, Twitter and other online portals
 - presentations to the La Trobe Student Union internal conference
 - student training – ‘Consent and Healthy Relationships’ and ‘Responding to Disclosures’
 - tailored training for welfare officers and accommodation services staff and student ambassadors/leaders
 - Residential Education Program
 - information embedded into postgraduate student induction sessions and induction packs
 - Graduate Research School communications from the Dean and via the online scholar publication
 - information and presentations into La Trobe101 induction sessions for staff
 - staff training around ‘Making it Safe on Campus’, ‘Addressing Concerning Behaviours’ and ‘Positive Workplace Behaviour’
- **Physical safety and facilities management initiatives include:**
 - on-campus security 24/7 and emergency services on call
 - CCTV monitoring
 - campus lighting program
 - 84 gender neutral toilets across all campuses to support LGBTI community
 - after hours UNI-Safe Escort to escort students and staff after dark between buildings, campus car parks and local transport points
 - active partnership with Victoria Police

What else we will do

- **Analyse and respond to Respect. Now. Always survey results:** La Trobe actively encouraged students to take part in the world first study of sexual harassment and assault in the university sector – and 947 La Trobe students opted to participate. We welcome the survey findings and the scrutiny it puts on student safety on university campuses, and on public transport. We will analyse the data and make changes and improvements where we can. In particular, we are developing an Action Plan to ensure that the Australian Human Rights

Commission recommendations are appropriately implemented within La Trobe, and are also actively working to implement the actions in Universities Australia Ten Point Plan

- **Increase the promotion of support services to students:** the survey data shows us that many students still do not know where they can go to for help or to make a report/complaint. We will increase our efforts to promote these services to all students
- **Improved Resources:** the University will develop resources, including mobile and web-based resources to assist people to know when and how to respond and seek support. The University is partnering with Optus in the development of a mobile phone app which will provide students with personal safety information and contact details for campus support services. The app will also allow any student who may feel unsafe on campus to trigger a duress alarm monitored 24/7 by the security operations centre
- **Bystander Action:** the survey has found that while many people witnessed an instance of sexual harassment, most witnesses said they took no action. The University will actively work to ensure that each member of its community is empowered to act when witnessing inappropriate behaviour. Initial training in bystander action/adaptive leadership has already occurred with student-based organisations but the University will now consider how this can be conducted on a much wider scale
- **Partner with State Government agencies:** the most commonly reported location of sexual harassment of La Trobe students responding to the survey is public transport to and from campus. La Trobe has commenced discussion with relevant agencies in the Victorian Government about how we can collaborate to improve the safety of public transport across the State and promote improved safety messages to our student community