

Sexual Violence and Harassment, Prevention & Response Committee *Updates Bulletin*

09

AUGUST 2026



Photo from the Go Purple Day in May 2026. L-R Rebecca Connolly, Cameron Keighron, Pauline Cronin, Noreen Dempsey & Niamh Kavanagh

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SUPPORTS

[A list of supports available to staff & students can be accessed here.](#)

If you would like more information or guidance on the supports available please email Rebecca / Niamh in confidence.

Contact Us

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Niamh
Kavanagh

Sexual Violence and Harassment,
Prevention & Response Team

Programme of Work Updates

Institutional Engagement

The SVHPR team has continued engagement with the University Management Team (UMT), Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights Committee (EDIHRC), and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Campus Committee (EDICC).

Discussions have focused on strengthening implementation of the University's work on ending sexual violence and harassment, including:

- Clearer leadership and accountability across University units.
- Embedding SVH responsibilities within relevant roles.
- Developing leadership training.
- Building capacity across the University rather than relying on individual teams.
- Increasing engagement with both staff and students.

While financial pressures remain, UMT indicated strong institutional support for progressing the programme, with a focus on actions that can be advanced without significant additional financial resources.

Policy & Procedure

The Committee discussed the need to ensure that University policies and procedures adequately address the sharing of intimate and sensitive images.

The Committee also identified a need to review existing social media guidance and relevant policies to ensure that expectations and processes are clear for both staff and students.

A wider policy review will be progressed through the Policy Development Group, with relevant stakeholders engaged to ensure appropriate oversight and consistency across University policies.



Trauma-Informed Policies & Procedures

The Committee continued discussions on ensuring that University policies and procedures reflect trauma-informed approaches.

Particular consideration was given to disciplinary processes relating to sexual violence and harassment, including situations where bringing parties together may be inappropriate. Members highlighted the importance of formally reflecting existing good practice within policy and ensuring that procedures, communication and sanctions are clear and appropriate.

Further work will be undertaken to consider how trauma-informed principles can be consistently embedded across University policies and procedures.



QA 361 Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy

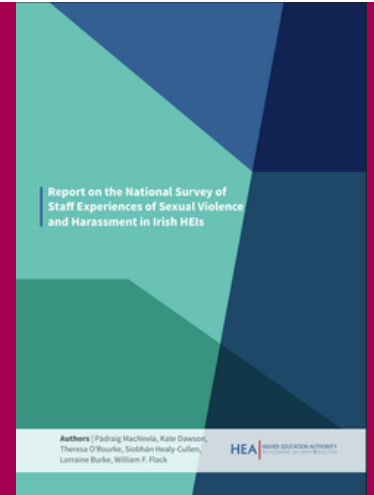
National Survey

The Committee received an update on the national survey of staff and student experiences of sexual violence and harassment.

Members were encouraged to promote the survey ahead of the 29 May deadline, with particular emphasis on increasing visibility through internal communications and social media.

The Committee recognised the importance of generating updated institutional data rather than relying solely on findings from the previous national survey in 2021.

ACTION: Targeted communications and reminders will be supported to encourage participation.



2021 National Surveys of Staff and Student Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish HEIs

National Engagement & Funding

The University has submitted a response on institutional approaches to sexual violence and harassment through the President's Office to the relevant Joint Committee. No feedback has yet been received.

The Committee also received an update on the Education and Awareness Subgroup, which is due to meet, and ongoing project and committee activity.

An application is also being prepared for the HEA EDI Enhancement Fund, with a proposal planned to support Phase 2 of the Men's Leadership (MEAS) Programme.



All-Staff & All-Student Communication

The President and Office of the Dean of Students issued communications to all staff and students on 18 March, outlining relevant legislation and University policy, reporting options and available supports relating to intimate image abuse.



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

Teachtaireacht ón Uachtarán
A Message from the President



Speak Out Report 2021–2024

The Committee reviewed highlights from the University of Galway Speak Out Report 2021–2024.

Members discussed the importance of presenting Speak Out data with appropriate context, particularly where figures relating to serious incidents are reported. While transparency was strongly supported, the Committee recognised the need for careful, trauma-informed communication to ensure that data is not taken out of context.

The Committee also discussed the limitations of anonymous Speak Out data, particularly as the tool does not capture case outcomes. It was noted that the University already considers Speak Out reports alongside informal disclosures and formal reports when developing broader activity reporting.

Members supported exploring a more integrated approach to institutional reporting in the future, while recognising the challenges involved in connecting information across different systems.

A cross-institutional group will be established to consider the findings and wider reporting approach.



SPEAKOUT

Speak Out is an online anonymous reporting tool available to all students and staff to disclose incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, hate crime, coercive behaviour / control, stalking, assault, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape.

The information you provide using this tool is valuable as the data collated will help inform initiatives aimed at addressing bullying, harassment and ending sexual violence and harassment at the University of Galway.

It is important to remember that as the Speak Out reporting tool is completely anonymous, there is no way of identifying or contacting any member of the university community who uses the tool.

SAFEZONE APP

The safety and wellbeing of students and staff is our top priority at the University of Galway. We have introduced a free smartphone app that promotes staff and student safety across all of our campuses.

SafeZone enables users to call for help and assistance when they need it most, giving you fast access to security whenever and wherever you are on campus, and allows the University to send notifications to users, e.g. in the event of severe weather or building closure.

SafeZone also allows you to easily check in and share your location on campus.

The app is now available to download from the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).

Go Purple Day 2026

Colleagues across University of Galway joined the nationwide Go Purple Day initiative in support of victim-survivors of domestic abuse 💜

Go Purple Day is a national awareness initiative led by An Garda Síochána, with support from domestic abuse services across Ireland.

Staff & Students wore purple to raise awareness of domestic abuse and the supports available, while sending a clear message of solidarity: you are not alone.



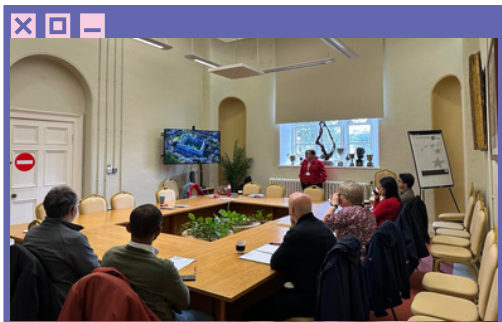
Available Training

STAFF

Information Session for Staff on the Sexual Violence and Harassment Prevention and Response Programme of Work.

We invite you to join a focused 1-hour information session introducing the University of Galway Sexual Violence and Harassment (SVH) Prevention and Response Programme of Work and the team leading this important area.

This session will help you build confidence and understanding in responding appropriately and compassionately when SVH-related issues arise in your work.



What the session covers:

- Meet the SVH Prevention and Response team
- Overview of the SVH Programme of Work
- Understanding Sexual Violence and Harassment in the higher education context
- The current policy landscape
- What we mean by Sexual Violence and Harassment
- The impact of trauma on individuals
- How to support a student or colleague who discloses SVH
- How to signpost yourself or others to appropriate supports

Session aim:

To equip staff with a clear understanding of SVH, its impact, and the supports available, and to strengthen confidence in responding appropriately and directing people to help.

Contact esvh@universityofgalway.ie to arrange the 1hr session for your School / College / Team / Unit.

NEW!

Staff Bystander Intervention

Now available on Canvas.

This is a module designed to provide training and other resources on how to step in, speak up and support others in situations of sexual violence and harassment.

By the end of the programme, participants will be able to:

1. Recognise inappropriate or harmful behaviour and understand the impact of sexual violence.
2. Appreciate the role and responsibility of a bystander in promoting safety and respect.
3. Apply safe and effective strategies to intervene or seek help.
4. Contribute to a campus culture of consent, respect, and active citizenship.



STAFF

Staff eLearning Programme: Trauma-Informed Institution

Now available on Canvas.

This short module takes approximately **30 minutes** to complete.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand what 'trauma' is and recognise common trauma responses and impacts.
- Promote and prioritise safety in interactions.
- Know best practices for responding to a disclosure.
- Apply trauma-informed principles to teaching, learning, or campus life contexts (as relevant to your role), ensuring appropriate support and avoiding re-traumatisation.
- Identify sources of help and access further information and resources.





Ending Sexual Violence & Harassment

At the University of Galway, we recognise that sexual violence and harassment, including, but not limited to, rape, sexual violence, sexual harassment, stalking, and relationship abuse, are serious issues that affect university communities.

The Sexual Violence and Harassment, Prevention & Response team, Niamh & Rebecca are committed to creating a safer environment in which to live, work, and study. We believe that every student has the right to feel safe, respected, and supported.

Our free services include:



**Confidential
Triage
Meetings**



**Support
Options**



**Reporting
Options**



**Training &
Education**



**Get Involved:
Advocacy &
Allyship**



**Advice & Support
for: Clubs,
Societies, Class
Reps & Managers**



**Rebecca
Connolly**

**Niamh
Kavanagh**

Sexual Violence and Harassment,
Prevention & Response Team

As we welcome you to our university community, we want you to know, ending sexual violence is everyone's responsibility, and support is always available.

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual violence or harassment, recently or in the past, or you are worried about your own behaviour, we are here to support you.

**Scan here to get
support or learn
more.**

