

SEC16D011

Title: *UUK Changing the Culture Taskforce Report*
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Issue

Members of SEC will be aware of the Vice Chancellor, Professor David Richardson's membership of the UUK Taskforce on violence against women, harassment and hate crime and of the valuable work this group has undertaken since its inception. The Taskforce formally reported on 21 October 2016 and the report, *Changing the Culture*, contains a number of recommendations for Universities to consider and implement. The Taskforce has committed to continuing its work in order to ensure that areas which could not be considered in sufficient depth such as staff to student sexual harassment, various forms of hate crime and domestic abuse can be addressed.

A paper, is due to be considered by University Council on 28/11/16. There is every expectation that the proposals will be approved: this is an issue that has national traction and the full support of the Vice Chancellor.

Recommendation

Council will be asked to consider and endorse the following proposals that:

- (i) The University, in partnership with the Union of UEA Students, implement the recommendations of the Taskforce in full with a view to being an exemplar of best practice in this regard.
- (ii) The University establishes a Working Group, reporting to Student Experience Committee, which will oversee the implementation of the Taskforce recommendations.

Resource Implications

There is likely to be some relatively minor revenue expenditure associated with the implementation of the Taskforce recommendations. Student Services will be able to support the costs associated with the implementation of the recommendations in so far as they relate to the utilisation of existing staff resource or minor operational expenditure. Where any element of the implementation plan developed by the Working Group requires significant additional resource to be invested, fully costed plans will be submitted, as appropriate, for consideration.

Risk Implications

Approval of the proposals detailed above will significantly mitigate the risk of the University failing to properly exercise its duty of care and/ or safeguarding responsibilities with respect to the matters addressed by the UUK Taskforce recommendations. Failure to implement the recommendations would present significant reputational risk to the institution.

Equality and Diversity

The recommendations of the Taskforce when implemented will apply equally to all members of the University community irrespective of their status with regard to protected characteristics. The proposals themselves are concerned with protecting and empowering all members of the University community, but will be particularly beneficial, when implemented, to those groups who have been historically more likely to be subject to the type of behaviour that the recommendations are intended to challenge and curtail.

Timing of decisions

Approval of the proposals at Council's November 2016 meeting will enable work to begin in earnest on the implementation of the Taskforce recommendations. The Working Group would expect to be able to confirm full implementation and proposals for ongoing work to ensure that UEA is at the forefront in tackling harassment and hate crime at the November 2017 meeting of Council. Regular reports on progress by the Working Group will also be submitted to Student Experience Committee.

Further Information

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Background

Changing the Culture has been produced in the context of a policy landscape in which the issues of sexual harassment, violence against women and the so-called 'lad culture' are increasingly recognised as challenges that require a robust and joined-up response from the sector. Since the publication of the 2010 government paper, *A Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls*, a number of initiatives have been launched, including the NUS campaign launched in 2010, the Bystander Initiative developed by UWE and the establishment in September 2015 of the UUK Taskforce. The UUK Taskforce initiated a review of the 1994 Zellick Report in order to ensure that Universities also had up to date guidance on how to deal with alleged student misconduct which may also constitute a criminal offence. This new guidance was issued by Pinsent Masons LLP in October 2016 and will inform the way in which UEA manages any alleged disciplinary breaches that would fall within its scope. This guidance has particular relevance for the issue of sexual and other forms of harassment and it is particularly in relation to precautionary measures that Universities might take that the new guidance differs from the established Zellick Guidelines. *Changing the Culture* is intended as a starting point for the work that is needed across the sector to ensure that we are moving effectively to combat harassment and hate crime. However, the recommendations, once implemented, will nonetheless represent significant progress in terms of the sector's response to these issues.

Discussion

The full text of the UUK Taskforce report is provided at Annexe One and it provides a thorough assessment of evidence and case studies drawing on information provided by Universities, Student Union organisations, charitable foundations and government agencies. The Vice Chancellor, Professor David Richardson, as a member of the Taskforce has expressed an absolute commitment to ensuring that the University implements all of its recommendations in full. Moreover, a key differentiating factor for UEA is that it offers one of the safest campus communities in the country and we can only enhance this reputational benefit by ensuring that we are exemplars of best practice with regard to this issue.

Key messages of the report

The key messages embedded within the report that all Universities are encouraged to adopt as points of principle and as a basis point for establishing the necessity of the recommendations that follow are:

- There is no place for sexual violence, harassment or hate crime on a university campus, nor anywhere else

- While there is no comprehensive data available on the number of such incidents, the impact of any such incident on a student is so potentially serious that universities must be ready to respond effectively and proactively engage in prevention initiatives
- While many universities have already taken positive steps to address these issues, university responses are not as comprehensive, systematic and joined-up as they could be in order to best combat the problem
- Though these issues are not isolated to universities – they are of relevance to wider society, including schools and the local community – UK universities have a significant opportunity to lead the way in preventing and responding to violence against women, harassment and hate crime

Recommendations and Commentary

The key messages of the report are exemplified by its recommendations and these are tabulated below along with some initial commentary on how the Working Group will take forward their implementation:

No	Recommendation	UEA Comment / Action
	Senior Leadership	
1	The Taskforce recommends that all university leaders should afford tackling violence against women, harassment and hate crime priority status and dedicate appropriate resources to tackling it.	A Working Group will be established and will be tasked with ensuring that the University strengthens existing policy and procedures along with introducing new initiatives to ensure that the issue is given the priority it deserves. Resource allocation will be considered on submission of appropriate costed plans indicating how said investment will strengthen our ability to combat harassment and hate crime.
	Institution-wide Approach	
2	Take an institution-wide approach to tackling violence against women, harassment and hate crime. (One way of adopting this institution-wide approach to responding to incidents of sexual violence is to use the points set out in chapter 5 of this report as a guide).	The Working Group will develop a set of clear and robust processes that will enable the University to respond effectively to such incidents. The procedural guidance provided in Chapter 5 of <i>Changing the Culture</i> will provide a starting point for the Working Group and as a template for incidents other than sexual violence.
3	Provide their governing bodies with regular progress reports summarising what progress has been made towards adopting a cross-institution approach. This should include reporting on the resource made available and used to support an effective cross-institution approach, including any recommendations for additional resource.	The Working Group will report on progress to each meeting of the Student Experience Committee and will provide an annual report to University Council. Reports to SEC will include details of any bids for resourcing, the success criteria associated with the allocated resource and suitably anonymised reporting on any relevant incidents.
4	Carry out a regular impact assessment of their approach.	The Working Group will carry out an annual impact assessment the outcome of which shall be included in its annual report to University Council
5	Involve their students' union in developing, maintaining and reviewing all elements of a cross-institution response.	The Working Group shall contain significant student representation and the Student Support Service will continue to maintain and develop its excellent working relationship with the Student Union with regard to the issue of harassment and hate crime

	Prevention	
6	Adopt an evidence-based bystander intervention programme	The Student Support Service and the Student Union are already working together on this issue and will be introducing a Bystander Initiative under the auspices of the Taskforce Implementation Working Group
7	Ensure that partnership agreements between the student and the university highlight up-front the behaviours that are expected from all students as part of the university community, set out disciplinary sanctions and state the university's commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students.	The University's non-academic disciplinary procedures were due to be reviewed as part of our rolling process of policy review. The review of non-academic discipline will be carried out in consultation with the Working Group and the revised regulations and processes that are subsequently submitted for approval will incorporate clear statements about our expectations of student behaviour, the sanctions that will flow from any breach of those requirements and our commitment to challenging harassment and hate crime.
8	Embed a zero-tolerance approach across all institutional activities including outreach activities with schools and further education colleges, engagement with local bars and nightclubs, student inductions (including international student inductions), and student information.	The Working Group will establish a number of initiatives, some of which may require further investment of resource, to ensure that our zero-tolerance approach is fully understood by the University community, implemented across the whole of the University campus and is capable of being effectively delivered and promoted.
9	Take meaningful steps to embed into their human resources processes (such as contracts, training, inductions) measures to ensure staff understand the importance of fostering a zero-tolerance culture and are empowered to take responsibility for this.	Student Services and the Student Union are working together and with external providers to ensure that appropriate training and awareness is embedded across the University community. We are currently trialling the <i>Consent Matters</i> training provided by Epigeum and are in the process of entering into a consortium training model focused around combatting sexual violence against women.
	Response	
10	Develop a clear, accessible and representative disclosure response for incidents of sexual violence and rape, working with relevant external agencies where appropriate.	The Working Group will review our existing disclosure arrangements and develop these in the context of best practice exemplars from within the sector and with advice from external bodies as appropriate.
11	Take reasonable and practicable steps to implement a centralised reporting system.	The implementation of a centralised reporting system that has provision for anonymity and is configured so as to support timely responses and actions by the University will be a key priority for the early work of the implementation group.
12	Conduct a thorough assessment of which staff members need to be trained and what training needs to be provided. A clear, multi-tiered training strategy covering different types of incident can then be developed.	As noted at recommendation 8 & 9 above, this is an area in which work has already begun. The delivery of appropriate training by staff type and function will be a key element of embedding our zero tolerance approach.
13	Build and maintain partnerships with local specialist services to ensure consistent referral pathways for students.	Both the University and the Student Union have strong established links with appropriate specialist services. We will ensure that these links are maintained, developed and appropriately recorded to ensure that referrals can happen effectively and swiftly when needed.

14	Establish and maintain strong links with the local police and NHS in order to develop and maintain a strategic partnership to prevent and respond to violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting students.	Both the University and the Student Union have strong established links. As indicated in the proposed membership of the Working Group (see below) and the plan to establish a community liaison group, a close working relationship with public sector partners such as the police and NHS services are essential elements of our response to the taskforce recommendations.
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Establishing the Working Group

The Working Group will be charged with implementing the Taskforce recommendations in full; liaising with other HEIs and relevant organisations to develop best practice; responding to any new recommendations that emerge from the continuing work of the Taskforce and establishing a community liaison group that will focus on developing the *Safe Campus : Safe City* initiative.

It is proposed that membership of the Working Group be as follows:

Director of Student Services (Chair)
 UUEAS Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer
 Any two of the UUEAS Liberation Officers
 UUEAS Director of Advocacy
 Head of Student Support Services
 Senior Resident Tutor
 A Faculty Pro Vice Chancellor
 Two representatives elected by UUEAS Union Council

In addition the Working Group will invite representation from Norfolk Police, the Harbour Centre and Leeway.

The Working Group will draft terms of reference at its first meeting to be approved by SEC and will report on progress to each meeting of SEC along with the provision of an annual report to University Council

Attachments

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/changing-the-culture-final-report.aspx>