



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin



Action Plan to Tackle Sexual Violence and Harassment - Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

A history of Consent at Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

Trinity College Dublin's sexual consent education programme was founded in 2016 and began facilitating consent workshops in that year. The programme was founded on a tripartite collaboration between the Students Union, the Student Counselling Services, and the Office of the Senior Tutor.

Since then, we have been expanding the educational services we offer, and are proud to be at the forefront of consent education in HEIs in Ireland. In 2020, the Framework for Consent for Higher Education was published by the Department of Education and Skills. As part of our commitment to this framework, and prevention of sexual violence in our institution, we have set up an oversight working group with staff, student, and external representation.

The aim of this oversight group is to implement the action plan which is outlined in this document. We recognise the problem of sexual violence in Higher Education, and we are committed to playing our part as individuals and as a community to changing this and making our University a safer place for all.



Glossary and Key Terms Associated with the issue of Sexual Violence and Harassment:

Consent: An agreement between participants to engage in sexual activity, or activities. In Trinity, we use the FRIES model of consent, which says that consent must be Freely Given, Retractable, Informed, Enthusiastic and Specific.

Disclosure: When someone tells another person, they have experienced sexual violence or misconduct.

Grooming: The process an abuser uses to desensitise someone, to make them less likely to reject or report abusive behaviour. Grooming can happen when there is a power differential within a relationship, which the abuser exploits for their own gratification.

IBSA: Image based sexual abuse (IBSA) is the non-consensual taking, sharing or threats to share nude or sexual images (photos or videos) of a person. This is often referred to as 'revenge porn' or 'leaking nudes'.

Rape Culture: A culture in which dominant ideologies, media images, social practices and institutions promote, condone, or tolerate, explicitly or implicitly, the normalisation of sexual violence and victim-blaming. Incidents can be ignored, trivialised, normalised and/or made the basis of jokes.

Sexual Assault: An act or threat of physical, psychological, and emotional violation in the form of a sexual act, inflicted on someone without their consent

Sexual Harassment: Any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which violates your dignity, makes you feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated, or creates a hostile or offensive environment.

Sexual Misconduct: Any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that is committed without consent or by force, intimidation, coercion, or manipulation. Sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and sexual intimidation are all forms of sexual misconduct

Sexual Violence: Any unwanted sexual activity or act including rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and female genital mutilation

Slut Shaming: This is a derogatory term which is generally used as a criticism of a woman for her real or presumed sexual activity, or for behaving in ways one thinks are associated with her real or presumed sexual activity.

Stalking: Persistent and unwanted attention that makes you feel pestered and harassed. It includes behaviour that happens two or more times, directed at or towards you by another person, which causes you to feel alarmed or distressed, or to fear that violence may be used against you.

Survivor/Victim/Victim-Survivor: Someone who has experienced sexual violence or misconduct. Depending on the person, a preference may be had for one of these terms. Unless you know how someone prefers to be referred to in this context, it may be best to say victim-survivor.

Victim Blaming: Blaming the occurrence of sexual misconduct on the survivor instead of the person who committed the assault. Victim blaming can be implicit or explicit. For example, asking someone what they were wearing or what they had to drink before being assaulted is a form of victim blaming. A non-victim blaming response acknowledges that people make choices to violate the bodily integrity of others, and that they alone are responsible for these choices.

List of Abbreviations:

AVP EDI – Associate Vice Provost for Equality Diversity and Inclusion
CFIGO – Consent Framework Implementation Oversight Group
D&R – Dignity and Respect
EOG – Executive Officers Group
GSU – Graduate Student Union
HEA – Higher Education Authority
HEI – Higher Education Institute
NAC – National Advisory Committee
SMT – Senior Management Team
SU – Student Union
ToR – Terms of Reference

Relevant Consent Framework Outcome	Action No	Action	Progress to Date/ Milestones achieved	Person Responsible	Timeframe (start/end)	Success Indicator
1. Institutional Culture						
<i>A member of HEI senior management team will have responsibility for the implementation of the Framework</i>	1.A	Assign a member of the Senior Management Team responsibility	<p>The Associate Vice Provost for EDI, who sits on the Executive Officers Group (EOG), has been assigned responsibility for the Framework.</p> <p>Business case being submitted to Planning Group mid-May '21.</p> <p>Co-Ordination support to the Group (Senior HR professional) assisting until an appointment in place</p>	Provost	Jun '20 – Sep '20	A member of SMT has taken responsibility for the Consent Framework.
	1.B	A Consent Project Manager to be hired to work with the AVP EDI and Implementation Oversight Group to oversee the rollout and management of all strands of the Action Plan and monitor its success		AVP EDI	Mar '21 – Jun '21	A Consent Project Manager is hired and in place. Action Plan monitored minimum of 3 times annually'
	1.C	Review the Plan, internally & externally regularly (progress & fit)		AVP EDI	Mar-21 - Q2 '22	Fit for purpose Plan in place & milestones achieved.
	1.D	Communicate the Plan regularly to create awareness of the Consent agenda		Head of Communications	Mar-21 - Q2 '22	Awareness demonstrated via HEA survey results
	1.E	Develop & deliver a Communications Strategy to support the Consent Agenda		Head of Communications	Feb-21 Q3 '21	Strategy agreed and underway
	1.F	Seek and secure central funding for TCD's Consent Agenda		AVP EDI		Budget that was sought is secured.

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1. Institutional Culture						
<p><i>HEIs will establish an Institutional Working Group to coordinate Framework implementation. This will be comprised of key stakeholders including academics, support services, administration, and student's unions, and will ensure due regard to balanced representation, in particular representation of groups at particular risk of experiencing sexual violence and harassment; women, those with disabilities, ethnic minorities and LGBT+.</i></p>	2.A	Establish working group with appropriate stakeholders	<p>The Consent Framework Implementation Oversight Group (CFIOG) has been set up and ToR agreed at EOG. It includes Director of HR, AVPEDI, Acting Director of Student counselling, Senior Tutor, Dean of Students, Senior and Junior Deans, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Research, SU and GSU Presidents, Internal subject matter expert, internal legal expert. External experts (Rape crisis; Gardai), Project support, Trade Unions, representation from disability, ethnic minority, and LGBT+</p>	AVP EDI	Jun '20 – Sep '20	Working group established with appropriate stakeholders.
	2.B	Review membership of CFIOG regularly		AVP EDI	Sep '20 -ongoing	Fit for purpose group in place at all times
	2.C	Group agrees a Draft Action Plan for submission to HEA		AVP EDI	Feb '21 – Jun '21	Draft Action Plan agreed and submitted to HEA (subject to University consultation & Board approval)

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1. Institutional Culture						
<i>Liaison and partnership with external specialist agencies to ensure effective engagement with external structures.</i>	3.A	Trinity engages with external specialist agencies to inform policy and ensure specialist external advice available to underpin Trinity's work on Consent.	Rape Crisis Dublin represented on the CFIOG.	AVP EDI	Nov '20-Feb '21	Rape Crisis Dublin represented on the CFIOG.
			Gardai representative identified.		Mar '21-ongoing	Gardai representative identified. Continued consultation & liaison with representatives, and presence on CFIOG

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2. Institutional Processes: Recording						
<i>HEIs will create an easy to use system for students and staff to disclose and report incidents, which would be reflected in a high level of awareness and understanding among both students and staff.</i>	4.A	Create a centralised reporting mechanism for anonymous reporting.	<p>Trinity, together with 9 other HEIs sought and were successful in achieving funding for a pilot Reporting Tool. This was housed in PCHEI- the professional body for student counselling.</p> <p>The Reporting Tool project has now been taken over by the HEA and is set to include all HEIs in Ireland. Trinity will be part of this national rollout.</p>	Acting Director of Student Counselling	Mar '21 - Q4 '21	<p>Reporting Tool delivered and in place (dependent on HEA)</p> <p>Signposting for the Reporting Tool will be available on the, soon-to-be-launched Consent website</p>
	4.B	Map processes for formal complaint recording in line with policy	<p>Draft recording processes are in preparation</p>	Director of HR	Mar '21 - Q4 '21	Clear processes agreed and documented
	4.C	Post the processes for all pathways of reporting complaints on dedicated website	<p>Draft pathways are in preparation</p>	Director of HR	Mar '21 - Q4'21	Pathways available on the website in user friendly versions. Success measured by increased formal reporting.

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2. Institutional Processes: Recording						
<i>The reporting system is compatible with reporting party/survivor rights, cognisant of the needs of vulnerable groups, and has the confidence of the higher education community.</i>	5.A	Approve the Reporting Tool via Trinity's internal compliance processes (IT, Legal & GDPR)		Acting Director of Student Counselling	Mar '21-Q4'21	Reporting Tool deemed compliant with all of Trinity's Legal, Data Protection and GDPR systems thus creating confidence in the system.
	5.B	Survivor rights data informs the reporting system.	Up to date statistics are available from the Counselling, Health and Discipline services in College.	Acting Director of Student Counselling	Mar '21 - Q4'21	Tool delivers relevant stats for the University (dependent on HEA)
	5.C	Include vulnerable & minority groups in the processes, including a one-month wider consultation on this Implementation Plan	Vulnerable groups are represented in the CFIOG	AVP EDI	Mar '21-Q4'21	In the HEA Climate Surveys, (See 8.D) vulnerable & minority groups report satisfaction with the new processes & reporting systems.

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2. Institutional Processes: Recording						
<i>Institutions shall record statistics on harassment, assault, and rape and report them in the context of their strategic dialogue with the HEA.</i>	6.A	Adapt processes and IT services to accommodate delivery of HEA Reporting Tool	Initial work on Reporting Tool for student purposes only already developed. Scope to be reviewed for adaption to wider audiences (staff)	Acting Director of Student Counselling	Mar '21 -Sep '21	Reporting Tool delivered and compatibly in place.
	6.B	Agree how data should be input and recorded via configuration of the Tool	Consultation and engagement with HEA providing updates about these requirements	Acting Director of Student Counselling	Mar '21 -Sep '21	Key metrics available in required format for reporting purposes
	6.C	Build website that serves staff & students to house the Reporting Tool	Initial work on student-facing Consent website completed.	Consent Manager	Mar '21 -Sep '21	Website built and Tool in place on the website

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3. Institutional Processes: Policy						
<i>Dedicated policies of breadth and depth consistent with the Framework aims referencing IUA/THEA guidelines and policies where appropriate.</i>	7.A	Revise Dignity & Respect policy to encompass guidance and procedures to manage area of sexual violence & harassment	Dignity & Respect policy is currently under review –and will be inclusive of framework aims on sexual misconduct/harassment	Director of HR	Feb '21 -May '21	Revised policy drafted and ready for consultation & approval processes
	7.B	Agree the timelines to review the Dignity & Respect policy and procedures.	Current policy under review and revision ahead of planned consultation phase with wider college community	Director of HR	Mar '21 -May '21	Timelines agreed for the review
	7.C	Gain required approvals for policy following a consultation period		Director of HR	May '21 – Q4 '21	Policy approved following consultation process

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3. Institutional Processes: Policy						
<i>Policies are explicitly linked to clear lines of responsibility, active responses, institutional reporting, and regular review.</i>	8.A	Define clear lines of responsibility & process maps in new policy	Clear lines of responsibility will be set out in revised policy	Director of HR	Jan '21 - Q4 '21	Clarity on roles and responsibilities clearly demonstrated via process maps in the policy
	8.B	Deliver training on policy so that active responses are initiated	Training part of new student orientation for past number of years.	Consent Manager	Q4 '21 - Q2 '22	Training delivered to identified audiences as part of an Educational Roll-Out Plan (See 13.A)
	8.C	Deliver an awareness campaign on Consent issues/resources across the college community	A number of awareness campaigns to students have been conducted over last number of years	Head of Communications	Mar '21 - Q2 '22	Awareness visible via number of incidents reported and managed
	8.D	Roll out HEA national surveys to inform reporting areas		AVP EDI	April '21	Surveys rolled out for University participation
	8.E	Review HEA survey outputs to inform additional targeted initiatives		AVP EDI	Sep '21 – Oct '21	Revised Plan with fit for purpose initiatives for reporting in place
	8.F	Agree timelines to review the policy		Director of HR	May '21 - Q4 '21	Timelines agreed and acted upon

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3. Institutional Processes: Policy						
<i>Policies include guidelines for addressing student complaints, including transparency for all involved.</i>	9.A	Develop guidelines to address complaints related to sexual violence & harassment as part of policy support	Procedure for dealing with complaints of sexual misconduct inclusive in D&R policy revision	Director of HR	Feb '21 – Q4 '21	Guidelines developed and rolled out; awareness reported in HEA surveys
	9.B	Establish a panel of investigators to manage complaints (budget to come from central funding - see 1.F)	In house investigators or procured 'just in time' services utilised to date for this purpose	Director of HR	Feb '21 – Q4 '21	Panel of investigators in place
	9.C	Ensure transparency on complaint handling in appropriate manner linked to GDPR compliance/Privacy Notices	Privacy Notice already in place	Consent Manager	Jun '21 – Q4 '21	Metrics on complaints available via reporting tool in line with GDPR/legal compliance

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3. Institutional Processes: Policy						
<i>Policy implementation is supported by compiling relevant information, leadership of high level HEI officer, and through the appropriate structures, an annual report on institutional initiatives and data to the Governing Authority.</i>	10.A	Review policy in agreed review timelines (see Action 8.F) and with best practice advice from NAC		Director of HR	Q4 '21 & annually thereafter	Fit for purpose policy in place due regular reviews
	10.B	Prepare a template for reporting annually to TCD governance structures		Consent Manager	Jun-21 - Q4 '21	Template prepared
	10.C	Report annually to TCD governance structures (in line with GDPR/legal compliance) on Consent issues and complaints		AVP EDI	Annual Q2 reporting	Data and information gathered, and report sent to EOG and Board
	10.D	Report annually to HEA (in line with GDPR/legal compliance) on TCD Consent issues and complaints		AVP EDI	Annual Q3 reporting	Requested data and information sent on time to the HEA

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4. Training and targeted initiatives						
<i>HEIs will provide direct student-facing activities including workshop/classes that promote an understanding of consent; student understanding and skills for speaking up and calling out unacceptable behaviour.</i>	11.A	Deliver culture workshops and a general Consent awareness campaign on appropriate behaviours as part of an overall Education Plan (see 13.A)	Over 1000 students and staff trained in live, interactive workshops including consent, consent plus and disclosure response training in 2019. These workshops pivoted online due to Covid-19 and were a success.	Chair of Consent Education Committee (Senior Tutor)	Q4 '21 – Q2 '22	Campaign and workshops underway per targets in the Education Plan roll-out
	11.B	Oversee the introduction of a Consent online module in 2021 and agree a target of students and staff completing it.		Dean of Students	Q4 '21 – Q2 '22	Agreed % targets enrolled and completing the module
	11.C	Oversee the implementation of Disclosure training and agree targets		Chair of Consent Education Committee (Senior Tutor)	Apr '21- Q4 '22	Agreed % target of students and staff enrolled and completing the module

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4. Training and targeted initiatives						
<i>Ongoing messaging to disseminate information consistent with the Framework aims for cultural change and awareness.</i>	12.A	Deliver culture workshops and a general Consent awareness campaign on appropriate behaviours as part of an overall Education Plan (see 13.A)	Website for consent information in Trinity including resources, supports, online booking system for workshops and interactive educational pieces has been created by Consent Intern.	Consent Manager (Oversight)	Apr '20 – Sep '21	Website launched & traffic monitored
	12.B	Oversee the introduction of a Consent online module in 2021 and agree a target of students and staff completing it.	Four bespoke educational videos around consent, disclosure training and bystander intervention to educate the college community have been produced.	Consent Manager (Oversight)	Apr '21 – Q4 '21	Website launched & traffic monitored
	12.C	Deliver a communication's campaign that creates awareness of the educational offerings available to students and staff	SU has worked on consistent messaging across college, and has worked on several information campaigns to this effect Recruitment for facilitators of consent classes was advertised to entire college community, and the facilitators cover almost all faculties.	Head of Communications	Mar '21 – Q2	Messaging disseminated in support of cultural awareness & change

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4. Training and targeted initiatives						
<p><i>HEIs will create and implement an education plan to ensure all staff and relevant students have at least a minimal agreed understanding and capacity to support students; create and implement a training plan for staff and students who contribute to initiatives and services.</i></p>	13.A	Agree and Deliver an Education Roll-Out Plan for staff & students with input from those at whom the Plan is aimed	<p>Establishment of Consent Education Steering Committee in 2016.</p> <p>Annual ‘train-the-trainer’ workshops for 10 to 20 Workshop facilitators in June of each year since 2016</p>	Chair of Consent Education Steering Committee	May '21 – Q4 '21	Plan agreed and ready to launch in line with agreed targets
	13.B	Agree and design content for specific groups within the Education Roll-Out Plan		Chair of Consent Education Steering Committee	May '21 - Q4 '21	Relevant content designed and ready for rollout to target groups
	13.C	Procure external service provider services to support roll out of the Education Plan		Consent Manager	May '21 - Q4 '21	External service delivery support procured and in place
	13.D	As part of the Education Plan, roll out an awareness campaign to all (see 12.C)		Head of Communications	Mar '21 – Q4 '22	Awareness demonstrated via feedback in HEA surveys
	13.E	Commence roll out of Education Plan in line with Plan’s deadlines		Consent Manager (oversight)	Q4 '21 – Q2 '22	Plan rolled out per agreed targets

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4. Training and targeted initiatives						
<i>HEIs will create and implement a system for measuring effectiveness of initiatives</i>	14.A	Roll out national HEA Climate Surveys & encourage participation	Campus survey had been planned in 2021 (students) to follow up and compare to last survey, in 2015. This will provide clear measurements of effectiveness of initiatives undertaken	Consent Manager	Q2 '22 & annually thereafter	High participation an indicator of engagement with the Consent Agenda
	14.B	Utilise outputs from surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of targeted initiatives		Consent Manager	Q3 '22 & annually thereafter	Fit for purpose initiatives in place due evaluation of their effectiveness
<i>HEIs will provide accessible, trauma-informed services; for supporting student disclosure, reporting and complaints, and for counselling and advocacy.</i>	15.A	Student Counselling to provide trauma informed disclosure services	Hiring of full-time psychotherapist with responsibility for sexual consent and disclosure within the student counselling services. Liaison with College health services regarding disclosures.	Acting Director of Student Counselling	Ongoing	Services available to meet demand (As reported on via Surveys)
	15.B	Student Counselling to provide for trauma informed disclosure training as part of agreed Education Plan (see 11.C and 13.A)		Acting Director of Student Counselling	Q1 '19 – into the future	Disclosure training modules have been and will continue to be available



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For more information on:

- 1) **The overall Action Plan, its implementation and policy**, please contact maguis18@tcd.ie
- 2) **Student supports and training**: please contact grimesa1@tcd.ie
- 3) **Staff training & targeted initiatives**, please contact maguis18@tcd.ie

If you, or someone you care about, is affected by the issues brought up in this Action Plan, there are supports available to you.

If you are a staff member, you can avail of free counselling through the employee assistance Inspire programme workandstudy@inspirewellbeing.ie
[staff-wellbeing/employee-assistance](#).

If you are a student, you can avail of free counselling and support via the Student Counselling Resources.