

UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE

THE UNIVERSITY  
OF MELBOURNE



# WHOLE OF ORGANISATION PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PLAN

National Higher Education Code to Prevent and  
Respond to Gender-Based Violence

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## **Section 1: Introduction**

### **About University College**

University College is a residential college affiliated with the University of Melbourne. Founded in 1937 as a women's college, it has since grown into a co-educational community known for its friendly, relaxed, and supportive environment.

The College is home to 350 residents, primarily first- and second-year students, with a small number of third-year students remaining each year. While most residents study at the University of Melbourne, the College also welcomes a small number of students from RMIT, Monash Pharmacy, and ACU.

The College employs approximately 40 full-time staff across IT, marketing, student services, finance, maintenance, guest services, and food services. The College also employs casual staff for academic tutoring and mentoring, and for after-hours support services. This staffing model ensures residents receive strong academic assistance, holistic wellbeing support, and an engaging residential experience.

Governance of the College is overseen by the College Council, which holds responsibility for strategic direction, policy oversight, risk, compliance, and financial stewardship. Day-to-day operations are led by the Head of College and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), who work closely with Council to ensure long-term stability and success of the College.

## **Gender Based Violence and College Commitment to the National Code**

The University College Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response plan is framed by an understanding of the gendered drivers of violence against women as articulated in Australia's national framework to prevent violence against women, Change the Story. These gendered drivers underpin the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032, Australia's national policy framework to end gender-based violence in one generation. These gendered drivers are:

- condoning of violence against women
- rigid gender stereotypes
- men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life
- male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women.

Other forms of discrimination and inequality – such as racism, homophobia, transphobia – intersect with gender inequality to compound people's experiences of violence.

Evidence from Change the Course (2017) and the National Student Safety Survey (2021) shows that colleges are high-risk environments for gender-based violence to occur. Evidence also shows that the likelihood of violence increases when men that hold discriminatory attitudes towards women and other people misuse alcohol.

University College is committed to reducing the prevalence of gender-based violence and providing a safe environment for our residents, staff and visitors. As a college we are in a unique position to engage closely and collaboratively with our residents and other stakeholders to take necessary steps in education and prevention that can help to change the story of violence against women in Australia. The College is dedicated to taking essential actions that can contribute to addressing underlying drivers of violence.

University College maintains a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence and any conduct that threatens the safety or wellbeing of our community. The College will take all necessary measures to prevent harm, respond appropriately to incidents, and ensure accountability in line with our duty of care, organisational policies, and obligations under the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence.

This Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan outlines University College's commitments in meeting the requirements of the National Code, and it establishes a coordinated framework to prevent gender-based violence, support those affected, and ensure effective, accountable responses across the whole organisation. The Plan has been informed by

a Whole-of-Organisation assessment of the enablers, systemic risks and barriers to preventing gender-based violence in University College, and is structured into five key focus areas that align with the National Code.

## Section 2: Accountable Leadership and Governance

National Code Standard Summary	Key actions	Evidence of compliance
<p><b>7.2 A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to prepare, implement and publish on its website a Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan.</b></p>	<p>University College has prepared a Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan informed by a Whole-of-Organisation Assessment. The College will publish its Prevention and Response Plan on its website and begin implementation of the plan from 1 January 2026.</p>	<p>The Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan and its accompanying Whole-of-Organisation Assessment will be publicly available on the University College website from 1 January 2026.  <a href="#">University College Policies &amp; Procedures   UC</a></p>
<p>7.2</p>		<p>The College engaged stakeholders including staff and members of the 2026 Student Club Executive in development of the Whole-of-Organisation Assessment and Plan (Appendix 1)</p>
<p>7.2</p>		<p>Parent and Student feedback survey results and Staff Engagement Survey results were also considered in development of Whole-of-Organisation Assessment and Plan.</p>
<p>7.2</p>		<p>The Executive Leadership Team and College Council will undergo an annual review of the Prevention and Response Plan to ensure that all Key Actions are implemented and there is consistent application and adherence to expectations of The National Code.</p>
<p><b>7.3 A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to monitor and measure the impact of the Prevention and Response Plan</b></p>	<p>University College will conduct a biannual survey and annual focus group to gain feedback from key stakeholders.</p>	<p>The quarterly Heads of College Report will have a dedicated gender-based violence and gender equality report, to keep record of gender-based</p>

on an ongoing basis and update the Prevention and Response Plan at least every four years.		initiatives undertaken throughout the year.
7.3	Survey and focus group data will be used each year to review the Prevention and Response Plan and assess its impact.	The annual semester-two edition of <i>Frappe Forte</i> (the College magazine) will summarise the year's gender-based violence initiatives and any evaluation data for all College stakeholders.
	At least every four years, the College will undertake a broader update of the Plan, drawing on survey and focus group insights along with additional data sources.	Findings from the biannual stakeholder survey and annual focus groups will be recorded and presented to the College Council annually.
		The College will review the Prevention and Response Plan in November 2026.

**Additional Actions from Whole-of-Organisation Assessment**

**Comprehensive education and training:** All staff, student leaders, and residents will receive tailored training on gender-based violence and respectful community standards, with ongoing leadership-focused and pre-arrival programs to embed knowledge and shared responsibility.

**Clear behavioural expectations and guidance:** The SAFE Policy, Alcohol Guidelines, Codes of Conduct for students, staff, and Council, and compulsory pre-arrival and orientation trainings will provide consistent, accessible standards for safe and respectful behaviour.

**Evidence-informed monitoring and feedback:** Regular surveys, focus groups, and reporting mechanisms will capture insights on community culture, wellbeing, and awareness, supporting continuous improvement of prevention and response initiatives.

**Strategic alignment and policy coherence:** Admissions management, pre-arrival programs, and intercollegiate collaboration will strengthen alignment with the University, ensure clarity of expectations, and streamline access to supports.

**Governance oversight and accountability:** Council members will receive training on the National Code and contemporary drivers of gender-based violence. Quarterly reporting through the Head's report to Council will maintain visibility of initiatives, track progress, and support transparency.

**Tracking and recognising impact:** A register of gender equality initiatives will capture the breadth of programs and opportunities provided to staff and students throughout the year, supporting evaluation and institutional learning.

### Section 3: Safe Environments and Systems

National Code Standard Summary	Key actions	Evidence of compliance
<p>7.4a A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require its staff to declare any previous investigations or substantiated allegations of gender-based violence in similar roles</li> <li>• consider any declaration and associated risks in employment/engagement decision-making</li> <li>• consider any substantiated allegations found during a person’s employment with the college in promotion/recognition processes</li> <li>• require staff to declare any existing or previous intimate personal relationship with a resident and manage and monitor any associated risks.</li> </ul>	<p>All current and prospective College employees will be required to complete a Declaration of any previous investigations or substantiated allegations of gender-based violence. This extends to full time, part time, casual, and contracted employees. (Appendix 2)</p>	<p>All declarations from current and prospective College employees will be stored confidentially.</p>
<p>7.4a</p>	<p>All current and prospective College employees will be required to complete a Declaration of any existing or previous intimate personal relationship with a resident. This extends to full time, part time, casual, and contracted employees.</p>	<p>A Register confirming employee compliance with Declaration will be kept and reviewed annually to ensure compliance for all staff members.</p>
<p>7.4a</p>	<p>Completion of a Declaration will also be a requirement for third party provider Constant who will be providing after-hours student support.</p>	<p>In response to any disclosures, the Executive Leadership Team will complete a risk assessment to ensure appropriate protective actions are taken. Legal advice from the law firm Piper Alderman</p>

		will be sought if needed to implement any employment-related requirements.
<p>7.4b A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prohibit the use of a Non-disclosure Agreement, unless requested by the Discloser</li> <li>if requested, ensure it does not stop the Discloser from sharing information as part of seeking support</li> <li>ensure any settlement agreements do not contain a non-disparagement clause.</li> </ul>	<p>University College will add a statement prohibiting the use of a non-disclosure agreement unless requested by the discloser to the student Terms of Agreement beginning in 2027. As 2026 contracts have already been signed for new and returning residents, as an intermediate step the College will include a statement regarding NDAs in the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct for 2026.</p>	<p>The Staff Code of Conduct and Privacy Policy will be updated to reflect a statement on Non-Disclosure Agreements in 2026, and will be available for view on the University College Website: <a href="#">UC Policies and Procedures   University College</a></p>
7.4b	<p>University College will update the Staff Code of Conduct and Privacy Policy to reflect prohibition of a non-disclosure agreement unless requested by the discloser and ensure staff are aware of their own rights and how to support student disclosures.</p>	<p>Staff will be advised in 2026 of their rights and responsibilities in relation to NDAs and non-disparagement agreements.</p>
7.4b		<p>The Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct with inclusion of Non-Disclosure Agreement information is available on the University College website in 2026. <a href="#">UC Policies and Procedures   University College</a></p>
<p>7.4c A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adopt the Provider's policies and procedures on preventing and responding to Gender-based Violence OR have and implement their own that meet National Code requirements</li> <li>develop and review the policy at least every three years in</li> </ul>	<p>In 2026, University College and the other University of Melbourne Colleges will adopt the SAFE Policy, currently being updated by Moores Legal following extensive consultation with students and stakeholders. This policy will explicitly address gender-based violence and is heavily influenced by the data and feedback collected during the consultation process.</p>	<p>The SAFE Policy will be available on the University College website in January 2026. <a href="#">UC Policies and Procedures   University College</a></p>

consultation with relevant stakeholders.		
7.4C		Staff and student representatives from the College participated in extensive consultation, alongside other University of Melbourne colleges, in developing the SAFE Policy. This policy directly reflects the data and feedback collected by staff and students as well as providing direct information regarding gender-based violence.
7.4C		The SAFE Policy will be reviewed at minimum every three years in partnership with the University of Melbourne Heads of Colleges

**Additional Actions from Whole-of-Organisation Assessment**

**Stronger, aligned policy framework:** University College will update and align its policies and Codes of Conduct to strengthen prevention and response to gender-based violence, clarify behavioural expectations, and ensure consistency with sector-wide best practice.

**Clearer reporting and support pathways:** The College will strengthen confidential and anonymous reporting, documentation, and case management through a centralised platform, ensuring clear, accessible pathways to support and response.

**Enhanced after-hours safety and wellbeing support:** After-hours support models and escalation frameworks will be strengthened to ensure consistent, student-centred support for safety, wellbeing, and community management.

**Improved governance, workforce, and HR practices:** Organisational structures, policies, and staff accountability frameworks will be reviewed to reinforce clear expectations of conduct, appropriate oversight, and strong governance processes.

**Stronger community standards and education:** The College will expand education, guidelines, and communication around respectful behaviour, responsible use of alcohol, appropriate online conduct, hazing prevention, and consent, supported by coordinated awareness campaigns.

**More effective student engagement and communication:** Multi-channel communication and student-led engagement initiatives will be strengthened to improve participation, build community connection, and reinforce shared values across the College.

**Trauma-informed, student-centred approach:** All policy, support, and response frameworks will be grounded in trauma-informed practice, prioritising student wellbeing, dignity, and access to support.

**Monitoring and continuous improvement:** The College will introduce regular review, evaluation, and reporting mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of policies, systems, and initiatives, and to support continuous improvement over time.

**Clear accountability and decision-making:** Roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes will be clarified to ensure timely action, appropriate oversight, and clear accountability across leadership, staff, and governance structures.

## Section 4: Knowledge and Capability

National Code Standard Summary	Key actions	Evidence of compliance
<p>7.5 A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require residents and staff to complete prevention education and training and responding to disclosures training that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ meets requirements of Standard 3</li> <li>○ is tailored to the student accommodation environment</li> <li>○ is delivered or approved by the provider</li> </ul> </li> <li>• promote evidence-based prevention messaging tailored to the student accommodation environment</li> <li>• evaluate any initiatives and use findings to inform future activities.</li> </ul>	<p>University College will require all residents and staff to complete prevention education and training tailored to the College community.</p>	<p>2026 staff training will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CASA</b> ‘Responding to Disclosures’ training in February 2026.</li> <li>• <b>Our Watch</b> ‘Gender-Based Violence’ training to provide foundational education and highlight the drivers of gender-based violence</li> <li>• <b>Avyon Consulting</b> ‘Trauma Informed Care’ training in April 2026</li> </ul>
<p>7.5</p>	<p>Education and Training will be provided by the College through expert third party providers. Key third party providers who provide specialist expertise include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Watch</li> <li>• CASA</li> <li>• Consent Labs</li> </ul>	<p>2026 Student Training will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Consent Labs</b> ‘<i>Responding to Disclosures</i>’ training to all Student Executive Leaders and Orientation and Welcome Week Leaders in February 2026.</li> <li>• <b>Our Watch</b> ‘Gender-Based Violence’ training to all Student Executive Leaders and Orientation and Welcome Week Leaders in February 2026 to provide foundational education and highlight the drivers of gender-based violence</li> <li>• <b>Consent Labs</b> will deliver Orientation Week Training to</li> </ul>

		all new and returning College residents
7.5	Where possible the College will also collaborate with University of Melbourne facilitators (i.e. UMSU) to provide delivery of relevant programming	Evaluation of all delivered training programs will include a post-training survey for data collection. In the event this is not facilitated by the third-party provider, the College will distribute a survey to all training participants.
7.5		The College will be using the Our Watch 'Change the Story' framework to communicate gender-based violence information to all College residents and staff
7.6 A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to ensure risk assessments are only undertaken by people with expertise prescribed in Standard 3, and when internal capability is not sufficient, engage a person with the requisite expertise.	University College has engaged with Equality Partners and Code Black Psychology who will provide expertise in helping the College ensure alignment with The National Code.	Code Black Psychology to provide information and training related to Risk Assessments
7.6	Code Black Psychology will assist with information related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing a Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan</li> <li>• Metrics and approaches required to monitor and evaluate the impact of this Plan</li> <li>• Specific training requirements to comply with the Code</li> <li>• Risk Assessment in response to disclosures</li> <li>• Thresholds for information sharing with universities.</li> </ul>	Key University College Staff will undergo ongoing professional development to ensure capability to undergo risk assessments where required
7.6	The College is currently undergoing consultation with other University of Melbourne Colleges regarding a shared independent resource that can conduct investigations and has requisite expertise	

**Additional Actions from Whole-of-Organisation Assessment**

**Comprehensive community capability building:** The College will embed compulsory, ongoing education on gender-based violence for staff, student leaders, and residents to strengthen prevention, shared responsibility, and institutional capability.

**Aligned and contemporary policy framework:** The College will adopt an intercollegiate approach to gender-based violence policy, ensuring consistency with sector best practice and clear, accessible prevention, reporting, and response processes.

**Clear behavioural standards and expectations:** Codes of Conduct and related guidelines will be strengthened to clearly articulate expectations around conduct, responsible use of alcohol, and respectful behaviour within the College community.

**Robust and trusted reporting mechanisms:** Reporting and case management pathways will be enhanced to provide confidential and anonymous options, support consistent decision-making, and build confidence in fair and transparent responses.

**Stronger alignment across the student lifecycle:** Admissions, pre-arrival education, and early engagement frameworks will be strengthened to improve alignment with the University and ensure consistent expectations and access to supports.

**Governance, workforce, and continuous improvement:** Organisational structures, HR frameworks, and feedback mechanisms will be reviewed to strengthen accountability, oversight, and evidence-based continuous improvement.

## Section 5: Safety and Support

National Code Standard Summary	Key actions	Evidence of compliance
<p>7.7a-c A provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure its responses, practices and support services are safe, person centred and trauma informed</li> <li>• provide or facilitate access to support services to disclosers and respondents</li> <li>• promote and disseminate information on how residents and staff can access policies, procedures and support services.</li> </ul>	<p>The College will prioritise trauma informed support training for all staff</p>	<p>The College will keep a Register of all training completed by College staff and residents, including those on trauma informed care</p>
<p>7.7a-c</p>	<p>Develop clear information resources for all staff and students</p>	<p>Expert third party providers will always be engaged for the facilitation of professional development and staff workshops</p>
<p>7.7a-c</p>		<p>The College will continue to participate in Community of Practice with University of Melbourne Colleges and the University</p>
<p>7.7d A provider must require a student accommodation provider to undertake a risk assessment following every disclosure and formal report.</p>	<p>If the College determines through the risk assessment process that there is ongoing or significant risk to the community, relocation of the respondent will be actioned immediately.</p>	<p>Case management, including response to disclosures and initial risk assessment, will be documented through the RespectX platform.</p>
<p>7.7ei Where a disclosure relates to behaviour occurring in residence or at an event organised by the residence, a provider must require a student</p>	<p>If the College determines through the risk assessment process that there is ongoing or significant risk to the</p>	<p>If it is determined through the disclosure and/or investigative process that a respondent must be relocated to manage community risk, the College will</p>

<p>accommodation provider to take all necessary action to manage risk, including relocation of the respondent where required and facilitating urgent access to support services.</p>	<p>community, relocation of the respondent will be actioned immediately.</p>	<p>take immediate action to relocate the respondent to alternative accommodation- this is a cost covered fully by the College. Depending on length of required accommodation, this will likely be a local hotel or apartment providing full amenities. Relocation would also entail clear expectations regarding the respondent's ability to access the College during the investigative process. The respondent will be assisted by the Dean of Students and Student Wellbeing Coordinator to access any necessary support services during this period of relocation. Clear documentation of any steps taken will be outlined as a part of the case management documentation in RespectX.</p>
<p>7.7eii A provider must have arrangements in place with a student accommodation provider to enable a discloser to choose the provider to lead the response to a disclosure, and the student accommodation provider must cooperate fully and implement any outcomes decided by the provider.</p>	<p>The College will provide all disclosers with clear information about their College and external options for choosing who can lead the response to their disclosure.</p>	<p>The College has a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Melbourne</p>
<p>7.7eii</p>	<p>The College will cooperate fully and implement any outcomes as determined by the University.</p>	
<p>7.7eiii A provider must have arrangements in place with a student accommodation provider to enable a discloser to choose the student accommodation provider to lead the response to the</p>	<p>As a part of the risk assessment process, the College will determine if relocation of the respondent is necessary to protect the discloser and/or the community. If yes, the College will take immediate action to relocate the respondent. The College will undertake a risk</p>	<p>The Dean of Students and Student Wellbeing Coordinator will share responsibility for ensuring that risk assessments are completed within the 48-hour timeframe, either by internal expert or external expert provider.</p>

<p>disclosure, and the student accommodation provider must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• undertake a risk assessment within 48 hours and from this determine necessary safety measures (including relocation of the respondent) and immediately implement them</li> <li>• manage and monitor risk</li> <li>• share necessary information with the provider to protect safety of others</li> <li>• implement support plans for both disclosers and respondents that meet requirements of Standard 4 within 48 hours.</li> </ul>	<p>assessment within 48 hours if a discloser elects for the College to lead the response</p>	
<p>7.7eiii</p>		<p>The Executive Leadership Team will determine level of individual and community risk as per the College’s established risk management protocols</p>
<p>7.7eiii</p>		<p>The College has a Memorandum of Understanding with The University of Melbourne, and as per the National Code will provide all required information to the university</p>

**Additional Actions from Whole-of-Organisation Assessment**

**Strengthened reporting and case management capability:** The College will implement a confidential and anonymous reporting platform to support disclosures, improve consistency and transparency in responses, and increase confidence in reporting harmful or unsafe behaviours.

**Enhanced after-hours response and escalation framework:** After-hours escalation and response processes will be formalised to ensure timely, appropriate, and well-governed decision-making outside business hours.

**Consistent after-hours wellbeing and safety support:** The College will strengthen its after-hours support model to ensure reliable coverage for student wellbeing, safety, and community management

## Section 6: Data, evidence, and impact

National Code Standard Summary	Key actions	Evidence of compliance
7.8 A provider must require a student accommodation provider to collect and report data prescribed by Standard 6, where applicable.	The College collects and maintains required data relating to disclosures, support pathways, risk management actions, training completion, and prevention initiatives, in line with agreed thresholds and external reporting obligations.	The College records disclosures, support engagements, and risk management actions through secure platforms, including RespectX, ensuring all relevant data is accurately captured, maintained, and kept up to date in line with reporting obligations. The College also maintains a register of training completion by both staff and students to ensure compliance with the National Code.
	Data relating to disclosures, reports, and responses is managed through secure reporting and case-management systems, enabling appropriate oversight, consistency, and accountability.	De-identified and aggregated data is used to protect privacy while enabling analysis of incident type, context, timing, and environmental factors within the College.
	The College reports data to relevant internal governance structures	Regular reporting throughout the year to the College Council supports accountability and informed decision making

### Additional Actions from Whole-of-Organisation Assessment

**Trusted and accessible reporting pathways:** The College will strengthen confidential and anonymous reporting and case management mechanisms to increase confidence in disclosures and ensure fair, consistent, and transparent responses.

**Enhanced after-hours wellbeing and safety coverage:** A fully active after-hours support model, supported by a complete overnight roster, will ensure continuous coverage and reliable response for student wellbeing, safety, and community management.

**Clear after-hours escalation and response arrangements:** After-hours response and escalation frameworks will be formalised to support timely decision-making and appropriate oversight outside standard operating hours.

**Systematic monitoring of culture and wellbeing:** Regular resident surveys and focus groups will be introduced to capture insights on community culture, wellbeing, and awareness of gender-based violence prevention and support.

**Structured use of feedback and data:** Key insights from student and parent feedback will be reviewed through the Executive Leadership Team and shared with relevant managers and teams to inform continuous improvement.

## Appendix 1



### **Whole-of-Organisation Assessment**

*National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to  
Gender-Based Violence*

## Executive Summary

This assessment, prepared under Standard 7 of the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence, provides a high-level overview of University College's approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence, ensuring student safety, and fostering an inclusive residential community.

University College is a co-educational residential college affiliated with the University of Melbourne, home to 350 residents and approximately 40 staff. Founded in 1937 as a women's college, it is now a vibrant community committed to safety, respect, and inclusion, guided by core values of empowerment, personal responsibility, respect, and care for community. University College is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where students and staff can study, work, and live free from gender-based violence.

University College benefits from a strong, values-driven culture and clearly defined expectations for student conduct. The College maintains strong relationships with stakeholders and demonstrates a commitment to student success and enriching opportunities for community engagement. Leadership and wellbeing staff are highly experienced and accessible, providing consistent academic, wellbeing, and after-hours support. Respect, consent, and inclusion are embedded in daily practice, reinforced through orientation programs, ongoing education, collaboration with student leaders, and in the demonstration of upholding expectations of the student Code of Conduct when required. Systems, policies, and infrastructure, ranging from secure IT platforms to clear codes of conduct, support a safe and connected residential environment, while intercollegiate collaboration promotes consistent standards and shared learning across the sector.

In any residential college environment and in working with young adults, several identified risks remain. Variability in student backgrounds, experiences, and engagement can affect adherence to College values, meaning harmful behaviours may still occur. Staff outside leadership and wellbeing teams have limited historical training in gender-based violence, reducing opportunities for early intervention. Alcohol use, longstanding traditions, and generational perspectives among current students and alumni present ongoing cultural challenges. Policy gaps including lack of inclusion of contemporary evidenced based information about gender-based violence, College expectations and risks related to alcohol use, and clear expectations for staff conduct in relation to gender-based violence can limit consistency in practice. Privacy and data-sharing requirements, particularly with alumni and donors, may restrict communication while safeguarding resident safety. Additionally annual turnover of student leaders can reduce continuity in initiatives, requiring ongoing effort to embed culture, education, and proactive support across the College.

University College is actively implementing a range of future actions to strengthen safety, wellbeing, and community culture. This includes the introduction of comprehensive staff and student leader training on gender-based violence, as well as targeted training on the drivers of gender-based violence to be delivered through orientation and college wide-education programs. Policies will be updated in 2026 to directly address gender-based violence, with clear expectations for behaviour and reporting. The College is expanding secure and confidential systems for managing disclosures and incidents through the implementation of RespectX, an anonymous reporting and case management platform, in 2026. Infrastructure and after-hours support models are being enhanced to provide greater consistency and active presence, ensuring 24/7 student support. Governance and operational processes are under review to ensure accountability, consistency, and alignment with best practice. The College continues to prioritise alignment with its values and the safety and wellbeing of all community members.

This assessment provides insight into existing strengths and systemic challenges, informs ongoing organisational reflection and alignment with national standards and sector good practice, as well highlighting the College's whole-of-organization commitment to creating a safe and supportive residential community free from gender-based violence.

## Introduction

University College is a residential college affiliated with the University of Melbourne. Founded in 1937 as a women's college, it has since grown into a co-educational community known for its friendly, relaxed, and supportive environment.

The College is home to 350 residents, primarily first- and second-year students, with a small number of third-year students remaining each year. While most residents study at the University of Melbourne, College also welcomes a small number of students from RMIT, Monash Pharmacy, and ACU.

The College employs approximately 40 full-time staff across IT, marketing, student services, finance, maintenance, guest services, and food services. The College also employs casual staff for academic tutoring and mentoring, and for after-hours support services. This staffing model ensures residents receive strong academic assistance, holistic wellbeing support, and an engaging residential experience.

Governance of the College is overseen by the College Council, which holds responsibility for strategic direction, policy oversight, risk, compliance, and financial stewardship. Day-to-day operations are led by the Head of College and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), who work closely with Council to ensure long-term stability and success of the College.

This Whole-of-Organisation assessment is framed by an understanding of the gendered drivers of violence against women as articulated in Australia's national framework to prevent violence against women, Change the Story. These gendered drivers underpin the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032, Australia's national policy framework to end gender-based violence in one generation. These gendered drivers are:

- condoning of violence against women
- rigid gender stereotypes
- men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life
- male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women.

Other forms of discrimination and inequality – such as racism, homophobia, transphobia – intersect with gender inequality to compound people's experiences of violence.

Evidence from Change the Course (2017) and the National Student Safety Survey (2021) shows that colleges are high-risk environments for gender-based violence to occur. Evidence also shows that the likelihood of violence increases when men that hold discriminatory attitudes towards women and other people misuse alcohol.

University College is committed to reducing the prevalence of gender-based violence and providing a safe environment for our residents, staff and visitors. As a college we are in a unique position to engage closely and collaboratively with our residents and other stakeholders to take necessary steps in education and prevention that can help to change the story of violence against women in Australia. The College is dedicated to taking essential actions that can contribute to addressing underlying drivers of violence.

University College maintains a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence and any conduct that threatens the safety or wellbeing of our community. The College will take all necessary measures to prevent harm, respond appropriately to incidents, and ensure accountability in line with our duty of care, organisational policies, and obligations under the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence. This Whole-of-Organisation assessment is a necessary reflective step in upholding the College's commitment to addressing gender-based violence.

A comprehensive assessment was conducted drawing on multiple data sources, including a review of University College policies and procedures; interviews with members of the 2026 Student Club Executive, analysis of internal data on responses to disclosures and formal reports; student and parent feedback forms; and qualitative insights gathered through ongoing interactions and feedback from students and staff. These sources collectively informed the whole-of-organisation review.

This whole-of-organisation assessment provides a clear and evidence-informed overview of University College's strengths, challenges and areas for improvement in relation to preventing gender-based violence and supporting victim-survivors. These are presented as enablers, risks and barriers in accordance with the language used in the National Code. This assessment identifies areas of operation relevant to University College as they may align with areas defined in the National Code.

The assessment will support University College's strategic decision-making, guide future planning and ensure our alignment with national expectations and sector good practice.

## Area of operation: Leadership, culture and environment

The Executive Leadership team of University College includes Dr. Jennifer McDonald, Head of College, Andre Louhanapessy, Dean of Studies & Deputy Head of College, and Katie Saya, Dean of Students.

The Head of College provides direction and leadership to the entire College community including strategic planning, academic leadership, student wellbeing, marketing, alumni, donor development, public relations and operations. As the Chief Executive Officer, she reports directly to the University College Council and has the delegated responsibility for the proper management of the College. She is supported by our dedicated staff team. The Head of College also works closely with the Melbourne Chapter of the Heads of Colleges and the senior leadership of the University of Melbourne.

The Dean of Studies and Deputy Head of College is responsible for the academic and careers program at UC. He organises the Student Careers Development Program and the College tutorial program, one-on-one academic consultations, and the Senior Common Room Community of Practice. He oversees a team of academic tutors, mentors, and the College librarian. He also assists students with any academic enquiries related to the university.

The Dean of Students is responsible for student wellbeing, experience, and community management. Her staff team includes the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, overnight Youth Worker team, the Registrar, and the Admissions and Administration Advisor.

### Sources of information

- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Bullying Policy
- Sexual Harassment and Sex Based Harassment Policy
- University College Student Handbook and Code of Conduct
- UC Staff Professional Development Register
- UC Staff Feedback Surveys
- Interview with 2026 Student Club Executive Members
- Orientation Week Schedule and Compulsory Trainings for New and Returning Students
- Parent Feedback Surveys (2024 & 2025)
- Student Feedback Survey (2024)
- Orientation Week Survey 2024 & 2025

### Enablers

- The Executive Leadership Team at University College is proactive in identifying and responding to student needs through frequent collaboration with the Student Club Executive, student needs surveys, and a regular review of issues that have been raised through individual consultations with Executive Leadership Team and the Student Wellbeing Coordinator.

- The College prioritises annual staff policy and procedures training, professional development opportunities and team workshops. The College also conducts Staff Engagement and Performance Surveys, to capture employee strengths, needs, and areas of improvement.
- University College priorities student wellbeing and has dedicated staff available to manage any issues that arise.
  - Dean of Students, Katie Saya, is a clinical social worker who has extensive experience in working with young adults. She has also worked directly within Gender Based Violence through her time as a Specialist Trauma Counsellor and Senior Practitioner with 1800RESPECT and as a Social Worker at the Royal Women’s Hospital.
  - Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Stephanie Poynton, is a professional counsellor who offers generalist counselling support to students Monday-Friday from 9-5. Students can book an online or in person appointment for short term or single session counselling, to explore issues related to mental health, gender-based violence, relationships, transition to college life, exam stress, and other general life stressors.
  - In 2025 an after-hours team of Resident Tutors and Youth Workers provides a hybrid of on-call and active support, triaging situations and maintaining community wellbeing. Resident Tutors are on call weekdays from 6 pm–11 pm and 6 am–8 am, and 24/7 on weekends, while Youth Workers are on active duty daily from 10 pm–6 am. This team responds to matters relating to safety, wellbeing, and community management. Revisions will be made to improve this after-hours model in 2026.
- University College prioritises respect and consent education for all residents. New residents undergo two workshops during their orientation week, and returning residents engage in a supplementary workshop to build on this knowledge. The Student Wellbeing Coordinator and Dean of Students work collaboratively during the year to promote educational campaigns through weekly newsletters and informative signage around campus, with the intention of making information and resources clear and accessible to all residents.
- Executive Leadership Team actively challenge gender stereotypes and discrimination by modelling positive, equitable, and inclusive leadership practices across all levels of the organisation. Equity is a core principle embedded in how staff and students collaborate, make decisions, and engage with one another. The College has a strict zero-tolerance approach to discrimination of any kind, supported by our Equal Opportunity Policy, Bullying Policy, and Sexual Harassment and Sex-Based Harassment Policy, as well as clear expectations in our Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. We take a firm and proactive approach to addressing any behaviours that breach these standards to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all residents.

## **Systemic Risks**

- Key leaders and wellbeing staff of the College are well trained in understanding and responding to issues of gender-based violence. Staff within other departments across the college would have received minimal information or professional development regarding this issue as of November 2025. While residents receive yearly education related to consent and respect in a residential college environment, they have not received specific training that addresses the gendered drivers of Gender Based Violence and the various types of violence that this encompasses.
- No College-wide cultural review has been formally conducted at this stage. While ongoing feedback surveys, after hours duty logs, and qualitative data collection are used to identify potential issues of inequality or concerning behaviour, these methods rely on voluntary reporting and may not capture all student experiences. This creates a risk that some issues remain under-identified
- The College expects all residents to demonstrate responsible behaviour regarding alcohol use and applies a harm-reduction approach to its management. Despite extensive measures to minimise risk, alcohol consumption among of-age residents remains a reality and continues to present ongoing safety and wellbeing risks.
- College staff leadership reflects a mix of ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds, supporting an inclusive environment. Among student leaders and residents, diversity is prioritised wherever possible, with a cohort intentionally balanced across regional Victoria, interstate, international, and Melbourne metro backgrounds, as well as a wide range of academic disciplines. While international representation fluctuates year to year, lower numbers can make cultural assimilation more challenging for some students, reinforcing the importance of strong cultural safety practices across the community.
- Each year, the Executive Leadership Team works alongside the student-elected Equity and Indigenous Representatives to deliver programs that prioritise equity initiatives. While student-driven programs are central to our yearly programming, there is a risk that initiatives may be unevenly implemented or limited if student leader interest and engagement fluctuates. To uphold College priorities while maintaining a student-driven focus, it is essential to actively support and encourage student participation in these initiatives.

## **Barriers**

- Staff across the organisation- excluding the Executive Leadership Team and Wellbeing Supports- have not yet received professional development on the drivers of Gender-Based Violence. As a result, some staff may lack the knowledge or language required to recognise early warning signs or emerging issues within the community, creating a risk that opportunities for early intervention and support are not fully utilised.

- The annual turnover of student leadership can make it challenging to maintain consistent, sustained action on community issues and shared priorities.
- Each year, the College welcomes around 200 new students with diverse experiences and levels of engagement. It takes time for new students to fully understand and embrace College expectations, creating a period where community standards may be inconsistently followed. Returning students do not always consistently model positive behaviours, which can make it harder for new students to adopt expectations and for community culture to be fully reinforced.
- University College currently has a high proportion of residents enrolled at non-University of Melbourne institutions, a residual impact of the transition period following the 2019 new build. This mix can create challenges in coordinating reporting processes and connecting students with the appropriate university services and may contribute to confusion among students regarding the resources and reporting pathways available to them.
- Current training is delivered primarily during Orientation, which limits students' exposure to key behavioural expectations and foundational education-particularly on topics such as respectful behaviours and gender-based violence-until after they arrive. The absence of structured pre-arrival modules reduces opportunities to establish expectations early and may weaken consistency in student preparedness across the cohort.

### **Key Actions in Response**

- A compulsory all staff training on Gender Based Violence will be delivered by Our Watch in 2026, and key staff including the new Youth Support Worker team will receive training delivered by CASA in Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Assault.
- Student Leaders (Including Student Executive and Orientation and Welcome Week Leaders) will receive training in Gender Based Violence during N Week (leadership training week), to be delivered by Our Watch. This will be in addition to training provided by Consent Labs related to responding to disclosures of sexual assault and being an active bystander. Embedding this yearly training will help to instil shared interest and commitment regarding gender-based violence.
- Returning residents will undergo an orientation session in 2026 with key training in gender-based violence delivered by Consent Labs, community expectations and policy information delivered by the Dean of Students, and wellbeing information and support delivered by the Student Wellbeing Coordinator.

- The College will develop Alcohol Guidelines to be incorporated into the 2026 UC Code of Conduct, setting clear expectations aligned with our risk-minimisation framework.
- University College will introduce a biannual resident survey and focus group opportunity to systematically capture insights on gender-based violence awareness, support services, policy, and related community trends in wellbeing and culture at the College.
- University College will develop an Admissions Management Plan aimed at increasing the proportion of University of Melbourne residents by 2028, in line with our MoU obligations. This commitment reflects our ongoing efforts to strengthen alignment with the university, streamline communication pathways, and ensure clearer, more consistent access to supports for all residents.
- The College will establish a pre-arrival training framework by 2028. This will include UC-specific expectations and training and will involve collaboration with intercollegiate partners and the University to ensure alignment, avoid content duplication, and deliver consistent expectations across the student cohort.

## Area of operation: Structures, norms, and practices

University College is committed to providing a transformative student experience grounded in strong wellbeing, safety, and support practices. The College delivers a diverse range of programs that cater to broad student interests while building education and awareness across key areas that promote wellbeing and community safety. Wellbeing principles are embedded in all aspects of College life, supported by a range of accessible services available to students 24/7. We work collaboratively with students to ensure their needs and perspectives drive our agenda, fostering open dialogue and encouraging students to raise ideas or concerns. The Dean of Students and Student Executive collaborate and advocate for the needs of the cohort, ensuring that conversations around wellbeing, equity, and community needs remain active and central throughout the year.

### Sources of information

- University College Student Handbook and Code of Conduct
- University College Organisational Chart
- Bullying Policy
- Sexual Harassment and Sex Based Harassment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Parent Feedback Survey (2024 & 2025)
- Student Feedback Survey (2024)
- Staff Engagement Survey (2025)
- Staff Psychosocial Hazards Training Survey (2025)
- Interview with 2026 Student Executive Members

### Enablers

- The University College motto- “Frappe Fort”- interpreted as “What you do, do with a will” or (“love, passion, and die-hard spirit”)- guides our community’s energy and commitment to the student experience. Our mission to provide an enriching residential experience is lived through our core values of empowerment and growth, personal responsibility, staying true, respect and kindness, care of community, and being progressive. These values shape everyday interactions, decision-making, and leadership, fostering a supportive and positive College environment.
- University College’s values are actively demonstrated in everyday practice. Students and staff are supported to take responsibility for their growth and contribution to the College through leadership roles, academic and pastoral programs, and community initiatives. Respect, inclusivity, and kindness are embedded in interactions across the College, reinforced through events, peer support, and formal policies. The College fosters a positive and authentic culture where diversity is valued, and students are encouraged to engage fully with the community. These values are also reflected in staff practices, governance structures, and strategic planning, ensuring that the College remains progressive and forward thinking while nurturing a supportive and connected environment for all residents and staff.

- Pastoral Care is an essential element of student services and support at University College. The Dean of Students and Student Wellbeing Coordinator are an active presence in the daily life of the College, well known to residents and present during orientations, as support during the semester, and at key events.
  - The Dean of Students, Katie Saya, is responsible for the overall experience and wellbeing of UC residents. As the former Student Wellbeing Coordinator, she is well placed to assist students with the complexities and challenges that come along as a part of college and university life.
  - The Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Stephanie Poynton, is an accredited counsellor that offers counselling support to students Monday-Friday from 9-5. Students can book an online or in person appointment for short term or single session counselling, to explore issues related to mental health, gender-based violence, relationships, transition to college life, exam stress, and other general life stressors. In addition, the Wellbeing Coordinator supports ongoing student wellbeing by promoting initiatives including distribution of weekly newsletters that address timely and relevant wellbeing issues for students.
  - After hours support at University College in 2025 is provided by Resident Tutors and Youth Workers. After-hours staff are responsible for upholding the safety, wellbeing, and community management of the college under direction from the Dean of Students.
- Safety and wellbeing are embedded as ongoing priorities throughout the academic year at University College, including:
  - Student engagement in compulsory training during both new and returning orientation programs, including sessions led by the Student Wellbeing Coordinator on available supports and mental health; by the Dean of Students on safety expectations, the Student Handbook, Code of Conduct, and all relevant policies and procedures; and from Consent Labs regarding consent and respect as foundations to living in a residential college environment.
  - Key policies in 2025 including the Bullying Policy, Sexual Harassment and Sex-Based Harassment Policy, and Visitor Policy outline behavioural expectations, reporting pathways, and available supports. In 2026 a new intercollegiate SAFE Policy addressing sexual harm will be introduced.

- The Student Wellbeing Coordinator promotes wellbeing programs and initiatives throughout the year and distributes a weekly newsletter addressing emerging wellbeing themes. Wellbeing initiatives focus on issue awareness and supporting early intervention.
- The Student Wellbeing Committee collaborates closely with the Wellbeing Coordinator and Dean of Students to identify student needs and deliver educational, interactive, and community-based initiatives that respond to priority wellbeing issues.
- Risk assessments are completed by College staff and the Student Club Executive for all College events to ensure safety considerations are integral to planning and delivery.
- University College delivers a comprehensive program of activities that promote gender equality, respect, diversity, and inclusion. While yearly offerings may vary based on community needs, examples of the College’s commitment include:
  - All new and returning students participate in consent and respectful relationships education delivered by Consent Labs, a national youth-led organisation
  - Student leaders receive specialised training during N Week (leadership training week) from Consent Labs to strengthen active bystander skills and support responses to disclosures.
  - The College hosts a diverse range of speakers and workshops each year on topics such as healthy masculinity and respectful relationships. Events are promoted collaboratively with Student Executive Leaders, with past partnerships including Daniel Principe, Minus18, Relationships Australia, Consent Labs, and the University of Melbourne’s Counselling and Psychological Services.
  - University-led initiatives, such as Respect Week, are promoted to ensure students have awareness of and access to key educational and engagement opportunities.
  - The College is actively strengthening its cultural awareness and competencies regarding First Nations Australians by engaging with the Indigenous Intercollegiate Committee, Murrup Barak, and participating in initiatives that deepen understanding and connection.
- The Executive Leadership Team and College staff promote respectful boundaries through transparency, open communication, and clear expectations for community conduct. These principles are embedded in our policies, the Student Handbook, and daily interactions. They reinforce a culture of support, accountability, and positive change, alongside a zero-tolerance stance toward discrimination or harmful behaviour. The Executive Leadership Team applies

these principles to decision-making, risk mitigation, and long-term planning. Staff collaborate frequently and closely with students, particularly student leaders, to identify emerging issues, maintain a unified approach, and uphold the College's standards and values across the community.

## **Systemic Risks**

- The College values actively reflect a commitment to gender equality, respect, and diversity. Specifically in regard to the small number of First Nations students at University College, there is awareness that engagement and uptake of supports is currently limited for this cohort. This constrains our ability to deliver a fully representative suite of initiatives. We are actively working to mitigate this through prioritised development of culturally safe practices, targeted supports, and strengthened pathways for engagement as the cohort grows.
- Women and LGBTIQ+ residents are embedded in all aspects of College life, including leadership, programs, and initiatives. Originating as a women's college, this legacy remains central to our culture and values. In 2026, women comprise 60% of residents and hold more than half of student leadership positions, supported by a female Head of College, President of Council, and Dean of Students. Equality and inclusion remain key priorities, with women playing a central role in shaping programs and initiatives. The College also recognises the ongoing risk that certain common areas or social spaces may become male-dominated, creating environments where women or gender-diverse residents may feel uncomfortable or unsafe. These risks are closely monitored, and residents are encouraged to report concerns promptly so the College can intervene and maintain a safe, equitable environment.
- As with many residential settings, the College recognises an inherent risk that broader societal attitudes, such as toxic masculinity and behaviours that disrespect or marginalise women and LGBTIQ+ people, may surface within the student community and influence student behaviour. Historically, this has included instances of sexualised statements, jokes, comments on attractiveness, and default use of heteronormative language. These behaviours reflect known cultural risks present across Australian society and can emerge within a cohort of young adults living in close proximity. Their potential to occur remains an ongoing cultural and behavioural risk that the College continues to monitor and address through education and prevention efforts.
- The College operates within a standard organisational structure with systems in place to ensure residents and staff can safely and appropriately raise concerns about any student, staff member, or member of management. These structures are designed to be supportive and to protect the integrity of the reporting process. However, the College acknowledges that hierarchical dynamics and the nature of living in a residential community can influence a person's comfort in coming forward and recognises this as a potential risk. The College aims to mitigate this risk

through its policies, processes, access EAP support, and a culture that encourages reporting and timely resolution.

## **Barriers**

- Risk of students reproducing harmful behaviours despite formal policies (e.g. jokes, comments, exclusionary practices). Differences in prior experiences, understanding, or awareness may create uneven engagement and following of cultural expectations.
- Staff hierarchy and governance structures, lack of a dedicated HR resource, combined with possible lack of clarity around reporting lines, may make some residents or staff hesitant to report inappropriate behaviour. Even with clear policies, perceived power imbalances, the complexities of living in a close-knit residential environment, and concerns about causing disruption within the community can inhibit disclosure or engagement
- The College has identified resistance from residents toward changing practices around alcohol use. Recognising the associated risks and long-term health impacts, the College aims to provide consistent expectations for alcohol consumption at both formal and informal events. Student resistance and continued engagement in risky drinking behaviours are often linked to tradition or the desire to replicate past experiences or preconceived notions of the “college experience.”
- The governance process for policy approval can be a barrier as it requires a recommendation from the People and Governance Committee and final approval by the UC Council. This can delay the development and implementation of new policy.

## **Key Actions in Response**

- In 2026 University College will be updating its policies related to sexual misconduct and adopting a SAFE Policy in line with other University of Melbourne Colleges. This will clearly outline drivers and examples of gender-based violence, as well as supports and reporting options for residents to ensure students are familiar with available options if they are to experience any type of unsafe behaviours.
- In 2026 University College will be adopting RespectX, an anonymous reporting platform that provides an alternative method of disclosure for students who experience any form of discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment, or behaviour that creates an unsafe environment. This aims to build confidence and trust with a consistent, fair, and transparent response to both formal and informal complaints, and will aim to increase reporting of any perceived or experienced harmful behaviours that occur at the College.
- The College will review its organisational structure and HR supports for staff

- The College will implement formalised 'Alcohol Guidelines' in 2026 as a part of the Student Code of Conduct to clearly outline the college's expectations around alcohol consumption. Implementation of these expectations will require student leader and staff support in providing consistent messaging and response to identified breaches of expectations.
- In cases where urgent policy approval is required, the Executive Leadership Team will inform the Council, who will approve through Circular Resolution.

## Area of operation: Systems and infrastructure

The College maintains a robust and secure infrastructure to support student wellbeing, operational management, and campus safety. The scope of security requirements extends across the college and is supported by Qamba, an external contractor who supports College IT requirements and best practice.

Physical safety is promoted through use of the Salto fob system, CCTV, and having a staff member present on site 24/7 during the academic semester to respond to any safety or security issues. A clear framework for critical incident escalation is supported by 24/7 on call support by the Dean of Students and rotating roster of facilities staff members for facilities-based escalations.

Privacy of information requirements and usage of personal data is outlined in staff contracts and resident Terms of Agreement. Privacy of information is upheld through secure internal structures and the Star Rez platform.

Overall, systems and infrastructure at the College are designed to balance accessibility, privacy, and safety, with continuous review and improvement to meet evolving needs.

### Sources of information

- After Hours Resource Information
- Privacy Policy
- Visitor Policy
- University College Handbook and Student Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Interview with 2026 Student Club Executive Members

### Enablers

- Accurate documentation of incidents and responses is essential for providing informed and comprehensive care for College residents. While IT does not manage systems containing students' personal information, it provides guidance on staff IT policies and cyber security best practices. Star Rez serves as the primary platform for storing student information related to admissions and residence support. Additionally, the Executive Leadership Team and Student Wellbeing Coordinator maintain records of student interactions within secure internal systems.
- The resident Terms of Agreement clearly outlines the College's position related to upholding privacy of student information, including use and distribution of personal information and legal reporting requirements.
- Staff are available on site at University College 24/7 during the academic semester. Business hours of the college are Monday-Friday 8-6, during which full time staff are present and on site. In 2025 from 6pm-11pm/6am-8am weekdays and 8am-11pm weekends Resident Tutors are 'on

call' for any response requirements. 10pm-6am daily, Youth Workers are on active duty to respond to student safety, wellbeing, and community management issues. The after-hours model is being reviewed for 2026.

- All staff have a shared responsibility to uphold the expectations outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, and all staff have a responsibility to report breaches to the Dean of Students for management.
- CCTV is currently utilised in key outdoor areas and in reception to assist with security and safety related issues that require investigation.
- The College has a dedicated Wellbeing Office, providing students with a safe, confidential space for counselling and wellbeing support
- Security is reinforced across the campus with Salto locks on all student rooms and controlled access to common areas. Each student carries a personal fob, and strict protocols around its use ensure a secure living environment, reflecting the College's proactive approach to student safety.
- A dedicated IT company, Qamba, provides IT support to the College. They recommend and implement best practices for staff IT policies and cyber security improvements.

### **Systemic Risks**

- IT systems or tools can be used appropriately or inappropriately depending on the individual. While technology can support safety and accountability, it cannot prevent someone from choosing to behave harmfully.
- The IT department utilises a firewall appliance, to safeguard the network traffic within the college. This appliance provides a basic web filter for blocking known malicious content from the internet. It is not possible to understand if the tools are being used for their intended purpose, or maliciously, without breaching the privacy of all users.
- Students will often keep their doors 'carded' (i.e. they block the door from locking) against clear College advice. This increases risk of safety violations as they are not protected by the Salto security system that is in place.
- Residents are welcome to have short-term guests in College, and while residents are responsible for their guests' behaviour, there is an inherent risk associated with visitors, particularly those arriving after hours. Since most guests arrive outside of business hours, the College may not always be aware of who is on site, which could pose safety, security, or wellbeing risks.

- Access to systems containing personal information is carefully managed in line with best practice. Staff access is limited to information and reports relevant to their own areas, both in internal systems and in StarRez. While there is currently no dedicated electronic data system for documenting case notes and confidential wellbeing information, the College continually reviews and strengthens security protocols to ensure limited access and protect privacy of confidential information.

## **Barriers**

- Difficulties in balancing physical privacy with natural surveillance
- Inability to amend established third party IT systems (e.g. Star Rez)
- While the College does have a Social Media Policy for Staff, we have yet to include this in the student Code of Conduct.
- Need for a review of escalation and response protocols for after-hours staff, as this has not had a significant update since the COVID19era and could more adequately capture types of incidents and response that will be experienced by after-hours staff

## **Key Actions in Response**

- University College will improve its CCTV resources in key common areas (not in student rooms or corridors). This is not for active surveillance, but for ensuring visibility in the event of investigation or formal report requirements. This will be phased in across 2026-2027.
- In 2026 University College will be moving to a fully active After-Hours Support Model, ensuring consistent Youth Support Worker presence and availability from the hours of 6pm-8am weekdays, and 24/7 on weekends to assist in safety, wellbeing, and community management.
- RespectX will become the primary confidential platform for the documentation and case management of student disclosures and informal and formal reports.
- Implementation of Social Media Guidelines for students to be introduced in the Code of Conduct in 2026
- Revision and development of new after-hours escalation and response framework for after-hours staff, to be completed in 2026 and utilised by Constant Youth Support Worker team.

## Area of operation: Systems and infrastructure

University College provides a safe, supportive residential community that enriches the student experience through a holistic suite of services, programs, and contemporary facilities. Guided by a focus on facilitating connection, the College designs initiatives and spaces that foster meaningful, respectful engagement between residents, enabling them to connect and learn with and from one another- an essential element of the college experience in our technologically driven world.

Each College resident is assigned their own room, with over 90% of rooms currently offering double beds. We have various types of rooms available to meet student medical, mental health, cultural, and other identified individual needs. The College food services team provides three meals per day, meeting a wide variety of preferences and dietary requirements.

Wellbeing support at University College is also a key area of student support. A dedicated team including the Dean of Students, Student Wellbeing Coordinator, and after-hours staff, provides 24/7 support for managing a variety of student wellbeing, safety, and community management needs.

Academics are a cornerstone of the College experience as residents pursue the first years of their chosen degrees. The Student Careers Development Program is delivered by the Dean of Studies and Deputy Head of College. The Dean of Studies is also supported by the Admissions and Administration Advisor, and a team of academic tutors. The supports through this program include academic mentoring, group tutorials, individual consultations, academic workshops through the Senior Common Room Community of Practice, academic guests present at weekly high table dinners, and academic events such as the yearly Pathways Dinner.

The College works closely with the Student Club Executive to support effective service delivery and to ensure student leaders assist in communicating key messages and raising awareness of available supports. To equip leaders to feel confident in their roles, the College provides a tailored suite of leadership training each year.

### Sources of information

- University College Student Handbook and Code of Conduct
- University College Terms of Agreement
- University College Student Club Constitution
- University College Orientation Week Schedule and Training List
- Interview with 2026 Student Club Executive Members

### Enablers

- Strong engagement between the College and Student Leadership enables effective whole-of-organisation messaging and collaboration in effective service delivery

- The College has a broad range of supports and systems in place which contribute to the experience, safety, and support of college residents
- Messages of gender equality, respect, diversity and inclusion can be easily embedded into existing service delivery during orientation, pastoral care, safety and wellbeing supports, and reinforce these messages through regular contact with residents
- The College works closely with students to identify current needs and draws on their advocacy and advice to understand which issues or topics are most relevant to the community. This strong partnership provides insight into community dynamics and ensures timely, appropriate responses, as well as opportunities to support the management of identified issues.
- The College offers a broad range of supports spanning wellbeing, academics, student services, and more. Students benefit from a fully supported College experience, developing strong relationships and awareness of supports within the College while retaining the autonomy to decide if, when, and how they access these supports, fostering independence and self-directed growth.
- A comprehensive orientation program equips all new students with the information and tools to begin their College journey. This facilitated through a comprehensive leadership program for Orientation and Welcome Week Leaders. In addition to the building of connection and community, orientation covers key information sessions that involve reviewing policies, wellbeing support, consent and respect education, and more. The orientation week provides a strong foundation to help residents thrive and uphold the College's community expectations.
- The College prioritises using a trauma informed approach to managing disclosures and providing support for victim survivors. Transparency, choice, and collaboration are ensured to provide a safe and supportive response that best meets the needs of the victim-survivor.

### **Systemic Risks**

- The College student cohort changes year to year, with the interests, experience and needs continually evolving
- While student-driven programs are central to College programming, especially around gender and equity initiatives, there is a risk that implementation may be inconsistent if student leader interest or engagement fluctuates. Maintaining a strong, College-wide focus on these priorities requires ongoing support and encouragement of student participation through the Student Club Executive.
- While orientation sessions are compulsory, some residents may miss key sessions due to clashes with university orientations or late entry to college and missed orientation period. Although

make-up sessions are prioritised, there is a risk that a small number of students may not receive all essential information.

- Orientation provides a valuable opportunity to engage students before they begin university. However, making training sessions compulsory beyond this point is challenging due to competing student priorities, including classes, work, and extracurricular commitments. While ongoing reinforcement of key content and application of learnings is important, delivering consistent, sustained training throughout the semester remains a significant challenge.
- The College operates at full capacity, which reflects its popularity and demand. However, this limits flexibility to reassign rooms or accommodate room change requests, meaning that managing unsafe or challenging situations between residents can be more difficult, and is identified as a potential risk to individual wellbeing and community safety.

### **Barriers**

- Limited ability to change layout of accommodation or to provide change of room requests if someone is dissatisfied with their assigned room or experiences unsafe behaviour from another resident, due to having a 100% full College
- Students have reported a desire for more clarity around information, services, events and programs available and upcoming in the college
- Student engagement is at times limited due to individual schedules, priorities, and interest
- Distribution of parent and student survey results is limited to specific staff, limiting visibility to all staff teams
- After hours support in 2025 is split between Resident Tutors (on call) from 6pm-11pm weekdays and 24/7 on weekends, and Youth Worker Support (active) 10pm-6am daily. A difference in community visibility and engagement creates inconsistency in after-hours support and service delivery

### **Key Actions in Response**

- Notwithstanding our efforts to accommodate individual student needs, at times these needs are not disclosed until they are in residence. We will actively review our admissions and interview process to ensure there are multiple points for students to disclose personal needs.
- Establish a multi-platform approach to messaging students about upcoming events at the College. As a key mechanism, it is essential to engage Student Leadership as a part of this process to provide messaging on student-only social media and messaging platforms

- Student Leadership will work closely with the College to develop incentive-driven opportunities for engagement. Students have identified this as an area for improvement to strengthen community pride, foster connection across year levels, and create more opportunities for respectful interaction and social engagement between genders.
- Annual distribution of key data and feedback from parent and student surveys will be distributed via the Executive Leadership Team to relevant managers, who will then share with staff teams as appropriate.
- University College will engage Constant Security Services in 2026 to provide specialised Youth Support Workers after hours to support in safety, support, and community management from 6pm-8am daily and 24/7 on weekends. (Please note that while 'Security' is in the name of the organisation, the specific student accommodation-based program is tailored to provide a student centric and supportive approach to support, not surveillance).

## **Area of operation: Policies and procedures**

The College Council conducts policy reviews regularly, as outlined in each policy. The Executive Leadership Team works with the Council in the development, updating, implementation and communication of all policies, especially those that involve elements of risk and safety. College staff and residents are obligated to uphold the expectations outlined in key College policies, which are available on the University College website. Staff training regarding these policies occurs annually. Expectations are also thoroughly outlined for students during their new and returning student orientations, as well in ongoing communications throughout the year.

### **Sources of information**

- Student Handbook and Code of Conduct
- Student Terms of Agreement (Contract)
- Bullying Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Sexual Harassment and Sex Based Harassment Policy
- Staff Social Media Policy
- Visitor Code of Conduct
- Whistleblower Policy
- Employee Grievance Management/Resolution Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Moore's Legal Consultation with University of Melbourne College Residents
- Moore's Legal Consultation with Intercollegiate Staff and Safe Coordinators
- Moore's Legal Intercollegiate Student Feedback Survey Results
- Interview with 2026 Student Executive Members
- Qualitative Feedback Gathered throughout 2025 from 2025 Student Executive Members

### **Enablers**

- The College has clear policies that promote a safe environment for students and staff by outlining forms of unacceptable behaviour as well as the reporting and support resources available.
- Policies undergo regular scheduled reviews to ensure they are updated for relevance and effective implementation.
- Disciplinary processes are structured to minimise the need for victim-survivors to repeat their experience to multiple people.
- The College's policy framework promotes a safe, inclusive, and respectful community, free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Core policies outline responsibilities for all students

and staff, provide clear reporting and support pathways, and ensure impartial investigation and appropriate consequences for misconduct. The framework reinforces fairness, respect, and diversity, enabling the College community to value different perspectives while safeguarding the wellbeing of all members.

- The College embeds safety and compliance as core requirements in all staff recruitment processes, with mandatory Police Checks, Working with Children Checks, and comprehensive reference and background screening undertaken for every appointment.
- The College works closely and collaboratively with the University of Melbourne and intercollegiate partners in the development, review, and alignment of policies and procedures. This includes shared approaches to documentation, information-sharing, and meeting Memorandum of Understanding requirements that apply across the intercollegiate community.
- The College, along with other intercollegiate partners, has engaged Equality Partners and Code Black Psychology to assist in meeting the requirements of the National Code and to ensure the College is in line with best practice and up to date evidenced based information related to gender-based violence. This includes development and implementation of evidence-based risk assessment tools and frameworks for disclosures and formal reports.

### **Systemic Risks**

- Current Sexual Harassment and Sex Based Harassment Policy has a lens focused more on procedure, including reporting, investigation, and possible outcomes. While this has been done with intention to clearly outline process, further information regarding the systemic risks and drivers of gender-based violence would help to ensure the broad range of experiences that can occur are captured and understood by victim-survivors who are thinking about making a report or disclosure.
- While the College's policies promote safety, respect, and equity broadly, there is a risk that certain groups-such as LGBTIQ+ people, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and those from diverse cultural backgrounds- may not be fully represented or explicitly recognised within the policy framework. Without clear, explicit reference, there is potential for these groups' specific needs or experiences to be overlooked, even if inclusion is implied.
- Collective harmful behaviours, including hazing-type dynamics, are addressed in student leadership training but are not explicitly articulated in policy or the Code of Conduct. While related behaviours are covered in the Bullying Policy, clearer and more specific language would strengthen alignment and accountability.

- In 2025 there is an incident, community awareness and rumour can at times contribute to further impact on the victim-survivor. Victimisation and confidentiality are addressed through section 6 of the Bullying Policy, however managing these dynamics in a close residential environment remains difficult to predict and fully mitigate, but is a key risk that the College is aware of when following its internal disciplinary and investigative processes.
- In the event of an incident, the College prioritises victim-survivors' autonomy, empowering them to make decisions that best uphold their safety. At the same time, the College assesses ongoing risks to the wider community and determines whether a perpetrator should be removed from campus, either due to assessed risk or at the request of those affected, including during investigative processes. While support and choice remain consistent, responses are tailored to the specific circumstances of each situation. In some cases, victim-survivors may be reluctant to make a formal report which would lead to consequences. The overarching responsibility of the College is to manage the risk and overall sense of safety while prioritising confidentiality and privacy.

## **Barriers**

- The 2025 Sexual Harassment and Sex Based Harassment Policy does not directly identify Gender Based Violence language or it's drivers and could benefit from further explanation of gender-based violence as a human rights violation/safety issue
- Hazing and alcohol-related risks, which can increase the likelihood of violence, should be explicitly addressed in the Student Code of Conduct to enhance visibility and ensure students understand expectations and associated risks.
- In 2025 a lack of anonymous reporting system may limit reporting of incidents
- Although staff and students receive annual training regarding Policies, infrequent application of these frameworks can lead to confusion or lapses when they are needed.
- In 2025, current staff policies, employment contracts, and the new Code-related declaration requirements do not yet include explicit gender-based violence terminology or messaging.

## **Key Actions in Response**

- In 2026 University College will be replacing its Sexual Harassment and Sex Based Harassment Policy with the intercollegiate SAFE Polic, developed collaboratively with Moore's Legal. This policy will address gender-based violence and its drivers directly, while providing a clear, easy to understand outline of the supports and processes in place for residents.

- Information and expectations related to hazing will be added to the student Code of Conduct in 2026
- Implementation of Alcohol Guidelines as part of Code of Conduct in 2026
- Multi-platform information and awareness campaign to be developed as part of first semester orientation sessions for new and returning students in 2026
- RespectX will be implemented in 2026 as an anonymous reporting platform to provide another avenue for students to make reports
- The College will review existing HR policies and procedures and incorporate applicant and employee declarations of past investigations for gender-based violence allegations or determinations of gender-based violence conduct. Clear messaging will be provided regarding the purpose of such declarations in policies and procedures. Guidance will be provided to staff explaining the purpose, confidentiality, and assessment process for such declarations, and ensure that all declarations are stored securely.
- The College will clearly outline expected conduct and behaviours in position descriptions, employment contracts and performance agreement plans, explicitly stating that gender-based violence is unacceptable

## **Area of operation: Management and governance**

The Executive Leadership team of University College includes Dr. Jennifer McDonald, Head of College, Andre Louhanapessy, Dean of Studies & Deputy Head of College, and Katie Saya, Dean of Students. Governance of the College is overseen by the College Council, led by President Lisa Williams. The Council holds responsibility for strategic direction, policy oversight, risk, compliance, and financial stewardship. Day-to-day operations are delegated to the Head of College and the Executive Leadership team, who work closely with Council to ensure long-term stability and success of the College. The College Council meets a minimum of four times per year and also has numerous subcommittees that meet more frequently to manage issues across Finance, Risk, Audit and Compliance (FRAC), Governance, Scholarship, and Advancement.

### **Sources of information**

- University College Constitution
- Council Terms of Reference
- Council Office Bearers and Committees
- 2025 to 2027 Strategic Plan
- 2025 and 2026 Business Plans
- 2025 University College Organisational Chart
- Interview with 2026 Student Club Executive Members

### **Enablers**

- Members of Executive Leadership Team have a strong understanding of gender-based violence. Management has been actively engaged with the National Code and related GBV frameworks, including professional development through Avyon Consulting. The Dean of Students brings specialised professional experience working directly with victim- survivors. This provides a strong foundation for the Executive Leadership Team of the College, with a continued commitment to ongoing professional development and active engagement around issues of gender equality.
- The University College Council is comprised of members with a diverse range of experience and skill sets, and each member uses their professional strengths to contribute to Council Subcommittees, including Finance, Risk, Audit, and Compliance (FRAC), Governance Committee, Scholarship Committee, and Advancement Committee.
- Several Council members are former University College residents, bringing a strong personal connection and commitment to the success of the College community.
- The Executive Leadership Team of the College is committed to providing students with an enriching and transformative residential experience. This commitment is grounded in our core values, which inherently support a culture of gender equality, respect, diversity, and inclusion.

To realise an environment where students can genuinely thrive, it is essential that they feel safe, supported, and accepted.

- The College has zero tolerance for any risk that compromises the wellbeing of its residents. The College consistently takes firm, appropriate action in line with the Code of Conduct when required to uphold wellbeing of individuals and the broader college and intercollegiate community.
- The College has undertaken development of a Risk Register informed by an environmental scan and has also reviewed its internal processes and procedures through a Business Continuity Plan. The College regularly conducts surveys of its stakeholders including Parent and Student Feedback Surveys and Staff Engagement Surveys, and the College Council also conducts an annual Self Evaluation.

### **Systemic Risks**

- While gender-based violence is always taken seriously, college environments involve multiple and often competing risk factors. At times, attention may be drawn more strongly to other areas of risk, when in fact sustained focus on preventing and responding to gender-based violence and an intersectional approach should be consistently maintained.
- Historically, gender-based violence has been recognised as a significant risk within the College environment. It is important to view this as an institutional risk, not solely individual risk, to ensure the College addresses internal operations and systemic factors alongside individual incidents.
- While the College has consistently allocated resources to prevention programs and activities, particularly during key orientation periods, there is an ongoing risk that financial or time constraints could limit the availability or scope of these initiatives. The College actively mitigates this risk wherever possible, recognising the critical importance of education and prevention in supporting student wellbeing.
- Responsibility for responding to gender-based violence should be shared across the Executive Leadership team. However, because women currently hold most leadership positions, the response work has fallen predominantly to them by default. This dynamic reflects the current composition of leadership rather than role expectations, but it nonetheless creates an imbalance in women disproportionately providing prevention and response efforts.
- As the College's governing body, there is an inherent power dynamic between the College Council and College staff.

### **Barriers**

- Appointment of governing body members is considered by the People and Governance Committee and then recommended to the College Council. As a volunteer role, there is a potential risk that applicant numbers may be limited, and applicants may not understand the College environment.
- No measurement of the College's performance on leading gender equality initiatives
- There is not currently a Council Code of Conduct aligned with other College policy frameworks.
- Council members come from diverse, often corporate backgrounds, which may limit their familiarity with the nuances of a contemporary College community including implementation of requirements such as those under the National Code.

### **Key Actions in Response**

- Develop a Council Code of Conduct to align with current College policy frameworks
- University College will create a register of gender equality initiatives to capture educational programs and opportunities provided to staff and students
- Council Members to undergo training to enhance their understanding of the National Code and contemporary drivers of gender-based violence
- The quarterly Heads of College Report will have a dedicated gender-based violence and gender equality section, to advise Council and keep record of gender-based initiatives undertaken throughout the year

## **Area of operation: Community engagement**

The College places a strong priority on community engagement and meaningful connection. The College heritage as a former women's college underpins our ongoing commitment to safety, respect, and gender equity. The College's active participation in the intercollegiate community strengthens shared practice and collaborative support. We maintain a highly engaged alumni network and continue to grow opportunities for residents and alumni to connect in mutually beneficial ways. Through strong community engagement the College fosters a cohesive, respectful, and well-supported environment for all residents and stakeholders.

### Sources of information

- Interview with Alumni and Marketing Teams at University College
- Interview with 2026 Student Club Executive Representatives
- Visitor Policy
- Sexual Harassment and Sex Based Harassment Policy
- University College Student Handbook and Code of Conduct

### Enablers

- The College's origins as a women's college have fostered a progressive culture with deep foundations in respecting, supporting, and advocating for women. This heritage continues to shape our commitment to preventing gender-based violence, promoting gender equity, and ensuring a safe and accountable community for all residents.
- The College benefits from strong relationships across the intercollegiate community, supported by regular opportunities for collaboration, professional development, and information sharing. These connections promote consistency in practice, strengthen relationships, and build collective support across colleges across many areas of discipline.
- Strong and enduring relationships with alumni are a key asset. The College is actively strengthening opportunities for connection, recognising the mutual value these relationships bring. We maintain a highly engaged alumni and donor community committed to supporting student success, with annual events that foster continued connection and contribution.
- The College has a strong and clearly defined sense of its values and the type of students it seeks to recruit. We aim for consistency in selecting applicants who best align with the College's values and desired community demographics, helping to maintain a cohesive, respectful, and well-balanced student community. Where an individual or school community is found to outwardly demonstrate misaligned values, the College is adaptable in its approach and prioritises recruitment efforts elsewhere to maintain a cohesive and respectful student community.

### Systemic Risks

- While the College maintains strong relationships with schools that consistently refer excellent residents, interviews cannot always fully capture an individual's beliefs or intentions. As a result, there remains a residual risk that a student may join the community with values or behaviours misaligned with the College's expectations, despite robust efforts to minimise this.
- While recent alumni were previously subject to the Code of Conduct and received foundational education, newer training on gender-based violence and its drivers means they may not hold a comprehensive or up-to-date understanding, including how personal behaviours and actions can contribute to violence.
- Meeting university affiliation requirements and demographic targets can place pressure on the recruitment process, at times creating tension between fulfilling external demands and maintaining alignment with the College's values and community expectations.
- Managing data sharing and privacy presents a risk in alumni and donor engagement. Alumni or donors may request information about current or past students, but without consent, this cannot be provided. Upholding privacy is essential, as the College may not know the history of relationships, and releasing information could pose safety or harm risks.

## **Barriers**

- A generational gap in cultural norms means alumni from earlier decades may describe or validate behaviours, particularly around relationships, respect, and hazing, that conflict with contemporary College standards. This creates a risk of unintentionally re-introducing or perpetuating outdated or harmful perspectives that can undermine community comfort and safety in a respectful College environment.
- Alumni potentially tied to traditions involving alcohol or hazing may be resistant to upholding new cultural change and expectations when involved in college events (i.e., Sport Coaches)

## **Key Actions in Response**

- The Visitor Code of Conduct will be added to all event invitations for external guests, including alumni. A tick box will be added to the RSVP form for them to acknowledge they have read and understand the expectations of behaviour at the College before arrival. This is designed to help minimise incidents and manage any behaviours if required.
- All Student Executive Sport Representatives will be required to provide information regarding sporting team members, captains, and coaches at the beginning of each sporting season. Additionally, Sport Coaches and captains will be required to sign a Code of Conduct acknowledgement beginning 2026 in order to participate in their sport and ensure that College standards are acknowledged.

## Appendix 2



### Declaration Form

The College requires you to complete this form so that the College can meet its obligations under the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence (**National Code**).

**Question 1:** Have you ever been subject to an allegation of "Gender-based Violence" (defined in the National Code as "any form of physical or non-physical violence, harassment, abuse or threats, based on gender, that results in, or is likely to result in, harm, coercion, control, fear or deprivation of liberty or autonomy")?

Circle answer: YES / NO

If your answer is Yes, provide details of the allegations, the findings and the outcome (if there is not sufficient space below please attach further details to this form):

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**Question 2:** do you have an intimate personal relationship with a current resident/s of the College?

Circle answer: YES / NO

If your answer is Yes, name the resident/s:

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**Question 3:** have you previously had an intimate personal relationship with a current resident/s of the College?

Circle answer: YES / NO

If your answer is Yes, name the resident:

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Print Name

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Date

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Signature

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