

Sexual Harassment Response - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure outlines the processes Victoria University (VU) will follow to ensure compliance with its reporting obligations to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment \(PSEAH\) Policy](#) and [Child Protection Policy](#).

Section 2 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(2) HESF: Standard 2.3 Wellbeing and Safety; 6.1.4 Corporate Governance

(3) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: Standard 2.6 Wellbeing; 2.7, 2.8 Feedback, Complaints and Appeals. Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and FPP Requirements 2025: Standard 20 Compliance with Laws.

(4) ESOS: Standard 5 Younger overseas students; Standard 6 Overseas student support services

Section 3 - Scope

(5) This Procedure applies to:

- a. Current staff and students who received the following DFAT funded grants and scholarship programs:
 - i. Australia Awards Scholarships (AAS);
 - ii. New Colombo Plan (NCP);
 - iii. Mobility grants; and/or,
 - iv. Other DFAT funded programs.
- b. Personnel engaged by VU to perform DFAT-related work:
 - i. Partner institutions;
 - ii. Contractors or subcontractors;
 - iii. Consultants; and/or,
 - iv. Any other applicable entity.

Section 4 - Definitions

(6) Disclosure – A statement that a person has been sexually assaulted, harassed or exploited in connection with DFAT-related work or while on DFAT funded grants or scholarship programs, however communicated. A disclosure is not a complaint, in line with the VU [Student Complaints Procedure](#) or [Staff Complaints Resolution Policy](#), and is not investigated as one.

(7) Sexual abuse - The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

(8) Sexual exploitation - Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes. It includes profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from sexual exploitation of another person.

(9) Sexual harassment - A person sexually harasses another person if the person makes an unwelcome sexual advance or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, or engages in other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.

(10) Third Party – Suppliers, individuals and organisations who are engaged by a DFAT Partner to perform DFAT business.

Section 5 - Policy/Regulation

(11) [Sexual Harassment Response Policy](#)

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
All Staff and Students	<p>To have due regard for the rights and dignity of others at all times in accordance with the Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy (Staff) and Student Charter Policy (Students).</p> <p>To respond respectfully, compassionately and appropriately if a disclosure is made to you by any person.</p> <p>To provide any person who makes a disclosure to you with information or a referral to appropriate services for support, reporting and investigation.</p> <p>If a disclosure is made by a person aged under 18 years, to report the matter using the Child Safety Reporting Process in the Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People Procedure (this is mandatory).</p> <p>To not victimise a person who has made a disclosure or complaint.</p>
Chief International Officer	<p>Ensure all activities conducted by International Office comply with, and staff are provided appropriate information and/or training relating to, the DFAT PSEAH Policy, DFAT Child Protection Policy and this Procedure.</p> <p>Receive and appropriately act on reports from each Responsible Person which they receive in accordance with the Policy and this Procedure.</p>

Roles	Responsibilities
<p>Responsible Person: 1. Coordinator, Victoria Abroad 2. International Scholarships Coordinator</p>	<p>Ensure that all activities involving VU Staff and Students, Children and Young People are conducted in accordance with DFAT Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy, DFAT Child Protection Policy, the Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People Policy and Procedure, and this Procedure.</p> <p>Conduct appropriate risk assessments in relation to all activities (new or existing) involving Children and Young People and adapt the activities to mitigate risks.</p> <p>Report any alleged incident (which can include a disclosure or a complaint) and safety concerns to the: 1. Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer; 2. Chief International Officer; 3. Senior Coordinator, Safer Community.</p> <p>Report incident to DFAT: 1. within two working days of becoming aware of an alleged Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) incident. 2. within five working days for failure to comply with PSEAH and Child Protection Policy Minimum Standards (i.e. policy non-compliance issues).</p>
<p>International Scholarships Team – International Scholarships Coordinator</p>	<p>The International Scholarships Coordinator is the central point of contact for all AAS awardees to report any incidents covered by this Procedure.</p> <p>The International Scholarships Coordinator is responsible to report any alleged incident to DFAT, the Responsible Officer and Safer Community within the timeframe defined in Part D.</p> <p>Conduct awardee induction programs which include PSEAH and Child Protection briefing and compliance requirements.</p>
<p>Coordinator, Victoria Abroad</p>	<p>The Coordinator, Victoria Abroad is the central point of contact for all NCP awardees to report any incidents covered by this Procedure.</p> <p>The Coordinator, Victoria Abroad is responsible to report any alleged incident to DFAT, the Responsible Officer and Safer Community within the timeframe defined in Part D.</p> <p>Conduct pre-departure training and induction programs which include PSEAH and Child Protection briefing and compliance requirements.</p>
<p>Senior Coordinator, Safer Community</p> <p>People and Culture</p>	<p>To advise VU Global (Coordinator, Victoria Abroad and/or International Scholarships Coordinator) of any disclosures or complaints (applicable to staff/students who received DFAT grants/scholarships) which have been received directly by the Safer Community or P&C team that require reporting to DFAT.</p> <p>Safer community to investigate any alleged incident involving students following the relevant procedure outline in VU Sexual Harassment Response Policy.</p>

Part B - Background

(12) VU affirms through its [Sexual Assault Response Policy](#), [Sexual Harassment Response Policy](#) and [Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People Policy](#) its commitment to providing a safe and respectful environment for work and study for all members of the VU community.

(13) The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment \(PSEAH\) Policy](#) and [Child Protection Policy](#) outline both expectations and requirements for DFAT staff and partners to manage the risks of SEAH, child protection and report relevant incidents, should they occur during the delivery of DFAT funded business.

(14) VU provides opportunities which involve DFAT funded business for:

- a. DFAT [Australia Awards Scholarships](#) (AAS) awardees to participate in various courses at VU; and,
- b. Staff and students to participate in a range of overseas study experiences through study tours, semester

exchange and short programs via the [New Colombo Plan](#) (NCP).

(15) VU and its third party providers will play an active role in addressing and reporting SEAH and child protection incidents that occur in the course of DFAT business.

(16) This Procedure is underpinned by the principles outlined in DFAT's [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment \(PSEAH\) Policy](#) and [Child Protection Policy](#).

Part C - University Response

(17) The International Scholarships Team and Victoria Abroad will ensure that Staff and Students travelling overseas on DFAT funded business receive information pre-departure which specifies disclosure requirements and arrangements in an overseas context, taking into consideration cultural sensitivities. This will include support services available overseas.

Disclosures

(18) If someone makes a disclosure in relation to SEAH related to the delivery of DFAT programs or perpetrated by anyone engaged in official DFAT duties or business, an individual must, to the best of their ability and in accordance with the wishes of the discloser (where practicable):

- a. assist the discloser to contact security and/or police if they choose to do so;
- b. assist the discloser to access and understand University [policies and procedures](#);
- c. advise the discloser of counselling and support services available;
- d. refer the discloser to the relevant area for help and advice (see below).

(19) The University's [Sexual Assault Response Procedure](#), [Sexual Harassment Response Procedure](#), [Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People Procedure](#) details steps to be taken when staff or students experience, witness, or are affected by instances of SEAH.

(20) When an alleged incident of SEAH occurs in the course of an education abroad program, VU will follow the above policies and procedures in relation to child safety, sexual assault and harassment. However laws and procedures in other jurisdictions, as well as policies and procedures at host institutions, may differ from Australian Law and/or VU policy/procedure and may also need to be taken into account.

(21) VU Staff and Students may contact Safer Community for advice in the event of a SEAH incident.

(22) If a formal allegation is made against a staff member or student of VU, the University will investigate the matter under the relevant [Student Complaints Procedure](#) or [Staff Complaints Resolution Policy](#).

Key Contact for Support and Advice

International Scholarships Team – International Scholarships Coordinator	<p>The International Scholarships Coordinator is the central point of contact for all AAS awardees to report any incidents covered by this Procedure.</p> <p>The International Scholarships Coordinator is responsible to report any alleged incident to DFAT, the Responsible Officer and Safer Community within the timeframe defined in Part D.</p> <p>Reporting an incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Email: ausawards@vu.edu.au• Phone: +61 3 9919 1159
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Coordinator, Victoria Abroad	<p>The Coordinator, Victoria Abroad is the central point of contact for all NCP awardees to report any incidents covered by this Procedure.</p> <p>The Coordinator, Victoria Abroad is responsible to report any alleged incident to DFAT, the Responsible Officer and Safer Community within the timeframe defined in Part D.</p> <p>Reporting an incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email: educationabroad@vu.edu.au • Phone: +61 3 9919 1352
Safer Community	<p>Safer Community is the secondary point of contact for AAS awardees and SCO may seek assistance/support from Safer Community staff (if required).</p> <p>Reporting an incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email: safer.community@vu.edu.au • Phone: +61 3 9919 5707 • Report online to the VU Safer Community • Via VU Safe mobile app (Report a Concern)
People and Culture (staff)	<p>People and Culture (staff)</p> <p>Email: employeerelations@vu.edu.au</p>
Counselling Services	<p>To make an appointment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: +61 3 9919 5400

Part D - Reporting Obligations

Reporting to DFAT

(23) VU, through the International Office, is required to report to DFAT within two working days of becoming aware of an alleged incident of SEAH related to the delivery of DFAT programs:

- All reports of alleged incidents must use the [DFAT SEAH Incident Notification Form](#) and email seah.reports@dfat.gov.au.
- All reports of alleged incidents related to a person under 18 years old must use the [DFAT Child Incident Notification Form](#) and email childwelfare@dfat.gov.au.

(24) VU, through the International Office is required to report to DFAT within five working days (i.e. policy non-compliance issues) for failure to adhere to [PSEAH Policy](#) Minimum Standards.

(25) Where VU has already reported, but becomes aware of additional information, VU (via the International Office) must also report that information to DFAT as per Clause (23) a. and b.

(26) VU and DFAT take a survivor centred approach to the reporting of alleged SEAH incidents. Survivors' safety and wellbeing must be paramount to reporting and their information treated confidentially. Reports to DFAT will include de-identified data, unless express consent has been provided by the survivor.

(27) Safer Community and People and Culture are required to report any alleged incident received directly through their Office to the International Office (Coordinator, Victoria Abroad and/or International Scholarships Coordinator) which involves staff and students from the following categories:

- Students in receipt of DFAT-Australia Awards Scholarships Program;
- Students in receipt of DFAT-New Colombo Plan Scholarships Program;
- Students in receipt of Mobility Grants; or,
- Staff involved in organising study tours and mobility projects.

Reporting to Police

(28) Where appropriate and in accordance to the wishes of the survivors and whistle blowers, all alleged SEAH incidents that involve a criminal aspect should be reported through the correct local law enforcement channels.

Mandatory Reporting

(29) Further information on child safety reporting obligations is available in [Appendix 2 - Child Safety Reporting Guidelines](#) – Section 4 in the [Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People Procedure](#) and on the [Victorian Department of Education and Training Child Protection – Reporting Obligations website](#).

Part E - Risk Assessment

(30) VU must adhere to DFAT's risk assessment standards and will have appropriate risk management systems in place to ensure compliance with DFAT's [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment \(PSEAH\) Policy](#) and [Child Protection Policy](#).

Part F - Privacy and Record Retention

(31) Any use or disclosure of information gathered by the University in the process of managing an allegation or disclosure of a sexual offence will be on a 'need to know' basis, in compliance with the University's privacy obligations, mandatory reporting obligations, and will be kept confidential to the extent possible.

(32) All records related to a disclosure will be used and retained in accordance with the University's [Privacy Policy](#) and [Records Management Policy](#).

Part G - Further Support

(33) Further support for students is available from the following services:

- a. [International Scholarships Team](#);
- b. [International Student Support](#);
- c. [Safer Community](#);
- d. [Security](#);
- e. [Student Advocacy](#);
- f. [Student Counselling](#);
- g. [Victoria Abroad Team](#);
- h. [VUSafe](#) (App);
- i. [VUHQ](#) (Student Services Centre);
- j. [Welfare Services](#).

(34) Further support for staff is available from the following services:

- a. [EAP](#);
- b. [Security](#);
- c. [VUSafe](#) (App).

(35) Further support off campus is available from the following services:

- a. [Centre against Sexual Assault](#) (CASA);

- b. [Men's Referral Service](#);
- c. [National Sexual Assault Domestic Violence Service](#);
- d. [Sexual Assault Crisis Line](#);
- e. [Sexual Offence and Child Abuse Investigation Teams](#) (SOCIT);
- f. [WestCASA](#).
- g. 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)
- h. [inTouch](#) Call 1800 755 988
- i. [Q Life](#) Call 1800 184 527
- j. [Djirra](#) Call 1800 105 303
- k. [Women's Information & Referral Exchange](#) (WIRE) Call 1300 134 130

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	9th October 2020
Review Date	9th October 2026
Approval Authority	Senior Vice-President, Future Students and Planning
Approval Date	7th October 2020
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Accountable Officer	John Germov Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer +613 9919 5077
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