



St Hilda's College

THE UNIVERSITY of MELBOURNE ——— EST. 1964

**Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan**

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

**December 2025**

## Table of Contents:

<b>Page 3 – Page 5</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Introduction</a></u></b>
<b>Page 6</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Structure of the Whole-of-Organisation Plan</a></u></b>
<b>Page 7</b>	<b><u><a href="#">1. Accountable Leadership and Governance</a></u></b>
<b>Page 8 &amp; 9</b>	<b><u><a href="#">2. Safe Environments and Systems</a></u></b>
<b>Page 10 &amp; 11</b>	<b><u><a href="#">3. Knowledge and capability</a></u></b>
<b>Page 12 &amp; 13</b>	<b><u><a href="#">4. Safety and Support</a></u></b>
<b>Page 14</b>	<b><u><a href="#">5. Data, Evidence, and Impact</a></u></b>
<b>Page 15 – 17</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Glossary</a></u></b>
<b>Page 18 – Page 38</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Appendix 1: Whole-of-Organisation Assessment</a></u></b>
<b>Page 39</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Appendix 2: Employee Declaration Form</a></u></b>
<b>Page 40 – 44</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Appendix 3: Gender-Based Violence Training Matrix</a></u></b>

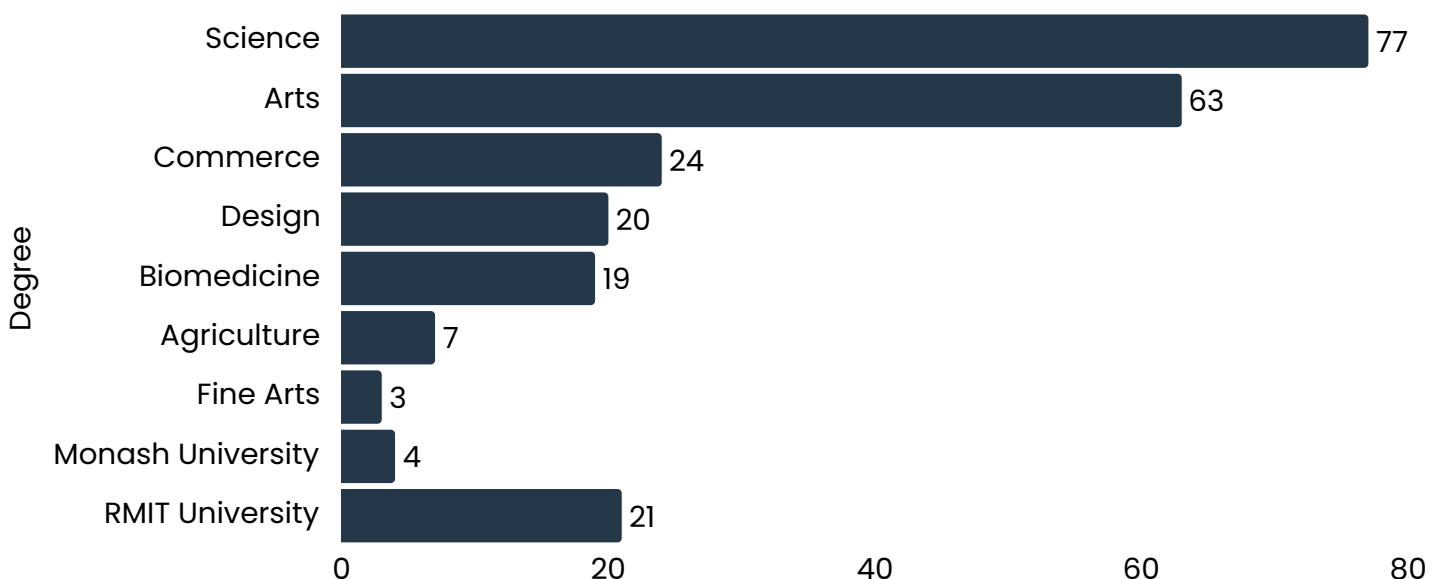
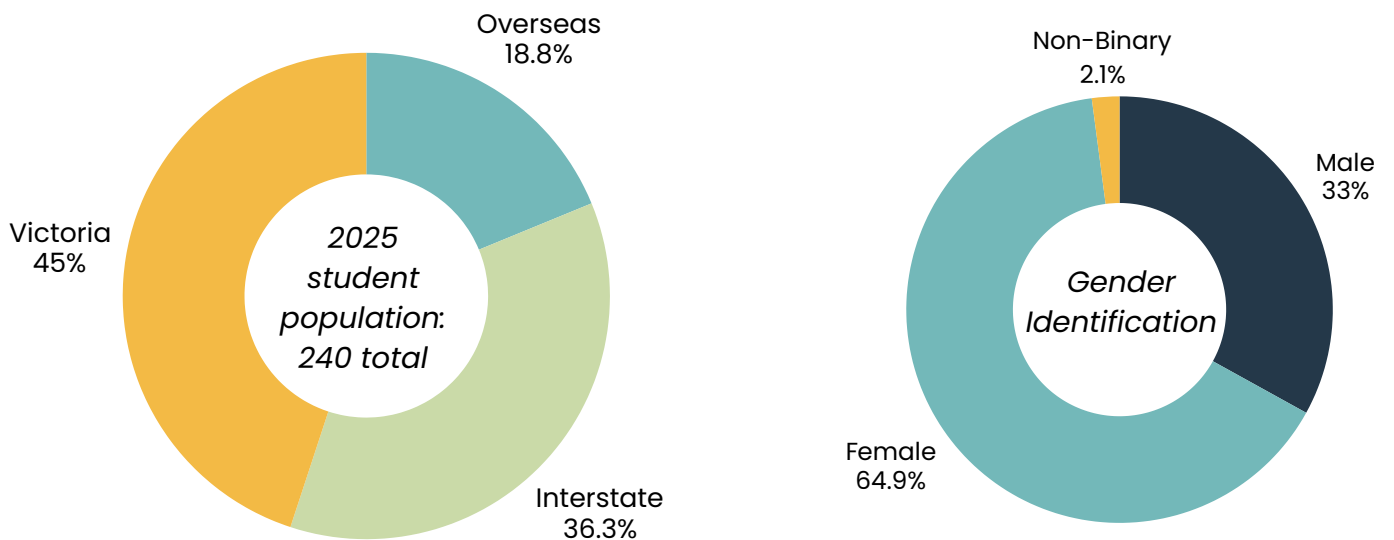


# Introduction:

## About St Hilda's

St Hilda's College is an independent residential college affiliated with the University of Melbourne. It was founded in 1964 and is now home to 240 undergraduate students across all faculties and who come from across Australia and the world. The College is limited by guarantee and is governed by a skills-based board of both executive and non-executive directors. The College employs approximately 14 full time professional staff, not including contractors and part-time academics, under a Senior Leadership Team of the Principal, Dean of Students and CFO. St Hilda's places a strong emphasis on the value of respect as core to its purpose and vision and supports the intent and outcomes delivered by the National Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Higher Education (The Code).

## Community at a glance:



\*Demographic numbers are based on the 2025 student cohort

## National Context and Residential College Risk

The National rates of gender-based violence in Australia are abhorrent and unacceptable. Intimate partner violence is the leading contributor to death, disability and ill-health for Australian women aged 18 – 44 ([Link: Webster, 2016](#)). St Hilda's College is committed to reducing the prevalence of gender-based violence, educating our students on the drivers of gender-based violence, and providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for our residents, staff and visitors.

Each year we welcome young people into our community knowing that it is likely that they may have directly or indirectly been impacted by gender-based 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.

St Hilda's staff and students are committed to taking a firm stance on the prevention of gender-based violence and to improving support structures available to people who have experienced gendered violence. As an educational institution invested in the support and educational formation of young adults we are committed to taking a whole of Organisation approach to prevention, early intervention and response to gender-based violence.

## Purpose, Evidence Base and Assessment Framework

This Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan outlines St Hilda's College's commitments in meeting the requirements of the Code. It establishes a coordinated framework to prevent gender-based violence, support those affected, and ensure effective, accountable responses across the whole organisation. This Plan has been informed by a Whole-of-Organisation assessment of the enablers, systemic risks and barriers to preventing gender-based violence in St Hilda's College. This assessment is provided as [Appendix 1](#).

St Hilda's Whole-of-Organisation plan and the assessment that has informed it are both 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, authored by Our Watch. 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:

<b>Driver 1.</b>	<b>Driver 2.</b>	<b>Driver 3.</b>	<b>Driver 4.</b>
Condoning of violence against women	Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life	Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity	Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control

Source : Our Watch : <https://assets.ourwatch.org.au/assets/Key-frameworks/Change-the-story-Our-Watch-AA.pdf>

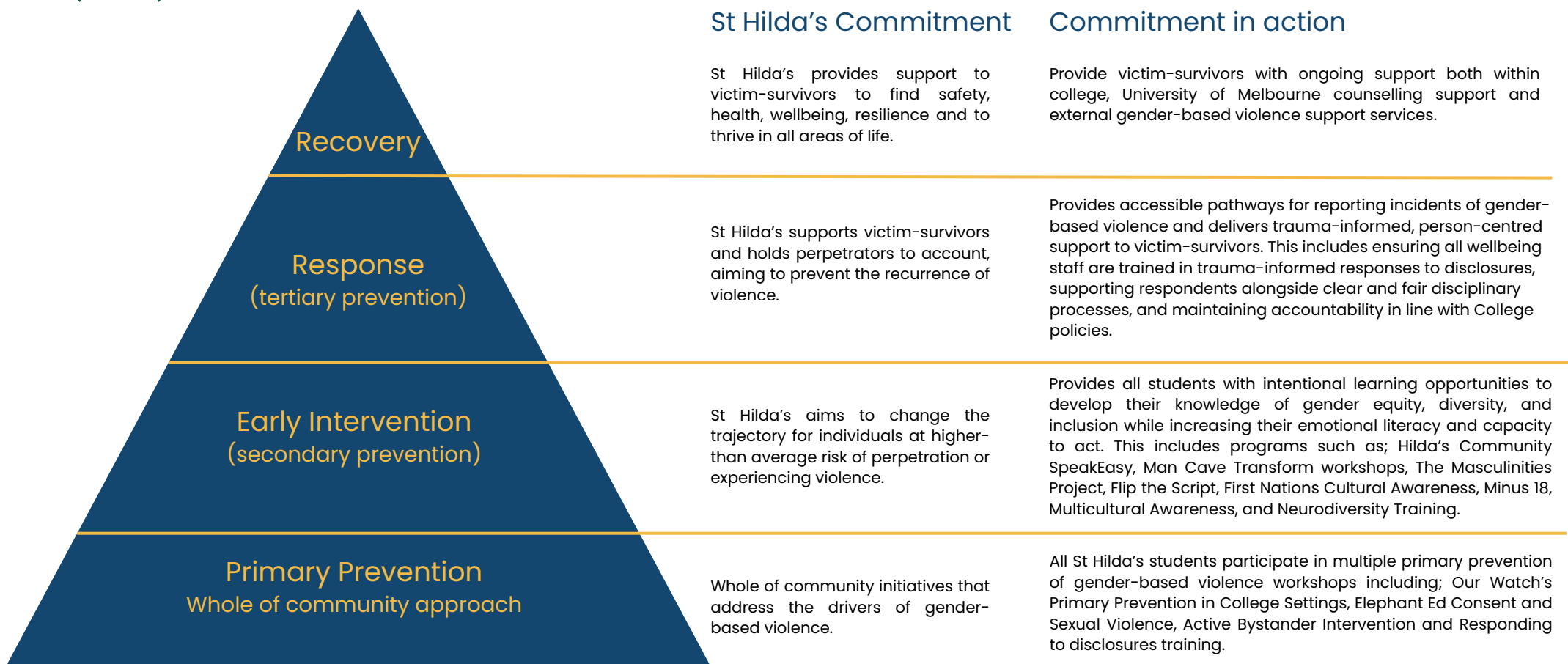
Other forms of discrimination and inequality – such as racism, homophobia, transphobia – intersect with gender inequality to compound people's experiences of violence. Evidence also shows that the likelihood of violence increases when men that hold discriminatory attitudes towards women and other people misuse alcohol.

## Continuum of Prevention, Response, and Recovery

St Hilda's whole of organisation approach works across the continuum of Primary Prevention, Early Intervention, Response, and Recovery. We have clear commitments and deliverable actions for each as outlined below.



## Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence at St Hilda's College



## Structure of the Whole-of-Organisation Plan

This Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan is structured into five key focus areas that align with the requirements of the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence. Together, these focus areas reflect a whole-of-organisation approach to prevention, early intervention, response and continuous improvement, and provide a clear framework for accountability, implementation and evaluation across the College.

The five key relevant focus areas that align with the National Code are:



Each of the five focus areas addresses the mandatory requirements of the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence, outlining how St Hilda's College meets its obligations through existing policies, systems, practices and governance arrangements.

In addition, each focus area includes a summary of additional actions identified through the Whole-of-Organisation assessment. These actions respond to identified enablers, systemic risks and barriers, and are intended to strengthen practice beyond minimum compliance, support continuous improvement, and enhancing the College's capacity to prevent and respond to gender-based violence over time.

# 1. Accountable Leadership and Governance

## Mandatory Requirements

National Code Standard Summary	Key Actions	Evidence of Completion
<p><b>7.2</b>  <b>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>Whole-of-Organisation plan to be reviewed and approved by College Board</p> <p>Create a gender-based violence advisory group that includes students and staff. This group will meet each semester to discuss this whole organisation plan, our actions, and review policies to create a more equitable environment.</p>	<p><i>St Hilda's Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response plan has been published on our <a href="#">website</a>. The plan has been developed internally by senior staff. It has not yet been reviewed or endorsed by the Board and has involved limited student consultation as key guidance was received after the end-of-year exam period and after the final Board meeting.</i></p>
<p><b>7.3</b>  <b>A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to monitor and measure the impact of the Prevention and Response Plan on an ongoing basis and update the Prevention and Response Plan at least every four years.</b></p>	<p>Review opportunities for consistent monitoring and evaluation of all education and training opportunities.</p> <p>Partner with Our Watch, Man Cave, and UMSU to monitor and evaluate the impact of primary prevention strategies in increasing the knowledge and capacity of our students and staff.</p>	<p><i>St Hilda's will work with a GBV advisory group to ensure the whole-of-organisational prevention and response plan is reviewed and updated at least every four years with the next plan to be finalised by December 2029.</i></p> <p><i>St Hilda's undertakes a prevalence survey for returning students at the beginning of every year through our anonymous reporting tool RespectX and will use this data point as a key longitudinal metric.</i></p> <p><i>St Hilda's will use Residential Experience Standard (RES) as a third-party survey provider that captures key metrics relating to student safety and knowledge.</i></p>

## Additional Actions from Whole-of Organisation Assessment

- Review staff entitlements to determine opportunities for improving gender equity and those experiencing gender and family-based violence.
- Source and engage an expert training provider who offers training to governing bodies on GBV, gender equality, diversity and inclusion. Ensure all new directors are on-boarded with this training opportunity within one-year of joining the Board.
- Introduce KPIs for the Principal and key senior managers specific to ongoing GBV prevention programs and initiatives.
- Engage 3-4 key feeder schools in understanding their culture and approach to educating for prevention of GBV to explore opportunities to create continuity in educational experience between secondary and tertiary settings.

## 2. Safe Environments and Systems

### Mandatory Requirements

National Code Standard Summary	Evidence of Completion
<p><b>7.4a</b>  <b>A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>require its staff to declare any previous investigations or substantiated allegations of gender-based violence in similar roles</b></li> <li>• <b>consider any declaration and associated risks in employment/engagement decision-making</b></li> <li>• <b>consider any substantiated allegations found during a person’s employment with the College in promotion/recognition processes</b></li> <li>• <b>require staff to declare any existing or previous intimate personal relationship with a resident and manage and monitor any associated risks.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>St Hilda’s requires all employees and potential employees to complete the declaration form shown as <a href="#">Appendix 2</a>. If a declaration is made, a risk assessment is undertaken to determine appropriate action.</i></p>

National Code Standard Summary	Evidence of Completion
<p><b>7.4b</b>  <b>A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>prohibit the use of a Non-disclosure Agreement, unless requested by the Discloser</b></li> <li>• <b>if requested, ensure it does not stop the Discloser from sharing information as part of seeking support</b></li> <li>• <b>ensure any settlement agreements do not contain a non-disparagement clause.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>St Hilda's <a href="#">policy framework</a> makes clear that NDA's and non-disparagement clauses are not permitted unless the discloser requests them.</i></p>
<p><b>7.4c</b>  <b>A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>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</b></li> <li>• <b>develop and review the policy at least every three years in consultation with relevant stakeholders.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>St Hilda's has adopted a <a href="#">policy</a> that is separate from University of Melbourne and specific to a residential setting. The policy has been formed following broad consultation as outlined in the assessment in <a href="#">Appendix 1</a> and will be reviewed at least every three years.</i></p>

*\*Note: only additional actions were identified from the whole-of-organisation assessment. As such, key actions have been omitted from the table.*

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

- Review St Hilda's marketing and recruitment collateral to ensure they directly address our expected cultural norms and values relating to respect, equity, diversity and inclusion.
- St Hilda's College will strengthen contractor onboarding and compliance systems by requiring prevention training, regular checks, and mandatory reporting of safety concerns.
- St Hilda's College will review contracts with vendors who have high levels of student contact to ensure appropriate training expectations and employment screening are in place to manage risk.
- St Hilda's College will strengthen employment reference checks to validate declarations regarding prior investigations or allegations and appropriately consider associated risks in employment decisions.
- Investigate opportunities for improving information sharing from the university to the college with respect to students entering the College after their first year of study who may have been subject to investigations or allegations in the context of their studies, through the separate and independent university processes and systems.

### 3. Knowledge and capability

#### Mandatory Requirements

National Code Standard Summary	Key Actions	Evidence of Completion
<p><b>7.5</b>  <b>A Provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>require residents and staff to complete prevention education and training and responding to disclosures training that:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>meets requirements of Standard 3</b></li> <li>◦ <b>is tailored to the student accommodation environment</b></li> <li>◦ <b>is delivered or approved by the provider</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>promote evidence-based prevention messaging tailored to the student accommodation environment</b></li> <li>• <b>evaluate any initiatives and use findings to inform future activities.</b></li> </ul>	<p>St Hilda’s College will require all students, in addition to student leaders and residential staff, to complete bystander intervention training that addresses drivers of gender-based violence, responding to disclosures, trauma-informed practice, and access to support services, in accordance with the training requirements of the Code.</p> <p>St Hilda’s will require all non-residential tutoring staff to complete onboarding training in gender-based violence prevention and response, ensuring academic staff understand their role in fostering a safe and respectful community.</p>	<p><i>St Hilda’s has a robust approach to training and education that aligns with the requirements of the Code. A full list of training and relevant vendors is provided as an attachment to the assessment in <a href="#">Appendix 3</a>.</i></p>
<p><b>7.6</b>  <b>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.</b></p>	<p>Review opportunities for consistent monitoring and evaluation of all education and training opportunities.</p> <p>Partner with Our Watch, Man Cave and UMSU to monitor and evaluate the impact of primary prevention strategies in increasing the knowledge and capacity of our students and staff.</p>	<p><i>St Hilda’s engaged Code Black Psychology to provide an evidence based and expert informed risk assessment template to be used by senior staff who possess necessary experience and have received training provided by Code Black Psychology.</i></p>

## Additional Actions from Whole-of Organisation Assessment

- St Hilda's will introduce an Accessibility Awareness Week and Cultural Awareness Week to promote respectful behaviour, belonging, and inclusion to challenge any social norms that contribute to gender-based violence.
- St Hilda's will implement evidence-based primary prevention programs, including [Flip the Script with EAAA](#) and the [Maculinites Project](#), and will evaluate these initiatives to inform the ongoing prevention efforts.
- Implement Equality focused training or programs including unconscious bias training, Multicultural awareness training and Gender Equity Victoria's 'Introduction to Gender Equity Training for staff and student leaders.
- Coordinate an intercollegiate workshop through the ManCave designed to equip leaders in the community with the skills to connect with students and make meaningful change. This will include understanding modern men and the factors that shape their behaviour and wellbeing, recognising relationships as a protective factor in emotional development, learning practical strategies for building relationships with students, and creating a structured plan for embedding this in a college context.
- Implement on-boarding training on gender-based violence for non-residential tutors, ensuring that all casual academic staff understand their position in fostering safe and respectful environments.
- Introduce multicultural awareness training to improve our community understanding of how culture, gender, sexuality, race, and disability shape people's experiences of inclusion, belonging, and safety.
- Provide training on 'Normalisation of Deviance' to all residential staff to ensure greater understanding of cultural norms and challenging poor behaviour.
- Utilise professional voices such as Daniel Principe in the provision of education to residents on respectful, lawful, and safe use of online platforms, including guidance on online content and pornography that may reinforce harmful gender stereotypes.
- Review our marketing and recruitment collateral to ensure they directly address our expected cultural norms and values relating to respect, equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Promote the QuickFix Good Night Out evaluation to students to strengthen our commitment to evidence-based prevention and improve our understanding of effective alcohol and drug harm-minimisation strategies.

## 4. Safety and Support

### Mandatory Requirements

National Code Standard Summary	Key Actions	Evidence of Completion
<p><b>7.7 a-c</b>  <b>A provider must require a student accommodation provider to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ensure its responses, practices and support services are safe, person centred and trauma informed</b></li> <li>• <b>provide or facilitate access to support services to disclosers and respondents</b></li> <li>• <b>promote and disseminate information on how residents and staff can access policies, procedures and support services.</b></li> </ul>	<p>Formalise communication pathways with the University's Safe Community Programs/CAPS/wellbeing offices for clarity in escalation, student support, reporting, etc.</p>	<p><i>St Hilda's has a robust approach to training and education that aligns with the requirements of the Code. A full list of training and relevant vendors is provided as an attachment to the assessment in <a href="#">Appendix 3</a>.</i></p> <p><i>St Hilda's College has an MOU with Cairnmillar, a local psychology clinic, minimising barriers to accessing support through reduced wait times for support and the provision of financial aid to students and staff.</i></p>
<p><b>7.7d</b>  <b>A provider must require a student accommodation provider to undertake a risk assessment following every disclosure and formal report.</b></p>		<p><i>St Hilda's engaged Code Black Psychology to provide an evidence based and expert informed risk assessment template to be used by senior staff who possess necessary experience and have received training provided by Code Black Psychology.</i></p>
<p><b>7.7ei</b>  <b>Where a disclosure relates to behaviour occurring in residence or at an event organised by the residence, a provider must require a student accommodation provider to take all necessary action to manage risk, including relocation of the respondent where required and facilitating urgent access to support services.</b></p>	<p>Investigate opportunities for ensuring consistently available emergency accommodation for the purposes of temporary relocation of a respondent. This may involve collaborating with the university and/or other affiliated colleges.</p>	<p><i>St Hilda's policy makes clear that relocation of a respondent is a reasonable action. St Hilda's will temporarily accommodate respondents in a nearby hotel if necessary.</i></p>

National Code Standard Summary	Key Actions	Evidence of Completion
<p><b>7.7eii</b>  <b>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.</b></p>		<p><i>St Hilda's policy makes clear that students are permitted and encouraged to decide whether the university or the College lead a response. The legally binding MoU between St Hilda's and the University of Melbourne also acknowledges this shared obligation.</i></p>
<p><b>7.7eiii</b>  <b>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 disclosure, and the student accommodation provider must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>undertake a risk assessment within 48 hours and from this determine necessary safety measures (including relocation of the respondent) and immediately implement them</b></li> <li>• <b>manage and monitor risk</b></li> <li>• <b>share necessary information with the provider to protect safety of others</b></li> <li>• <b>implement support plans for both disclosers and respondents that meet requirements of Standard 4 within 48 hours.</b></li> </ul>		<p><i>St Hilda's engaged Code Black Psychology to provide an evidence based and expert informed risk assessment template to be used by senior staff who possess necessary experience and have received training provided by Code Black Psychology. The College ensures that at least one senior staff member is available for undertaking risk assessments on a rotating roster during the academic year. The legally binding MoU with the University of Melbourne includes obligations to share information to protect the safety of others if required based on the outcome of a risk assessment and clear communication pathways have been established with the office of the Academic Registrar and the University Safer Communities unit.</i></p>

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

- Investigate opportunities for improving information sharing from the University to the College with respect to students entering the College after their first year of study who may have been subject to investigations or allegations in the context of their studies, through the separate and independent university processes and systems.

## 5. Data, Evidence, and Impact

### Mandatory Requirements

National Code Standard Summary	Key Actions	Evidence of Completion
<p><b>7.8 a-c</b>  <b>A provider must require a student accommodation provider to collect and report data prescribed by Standard 6, where applicable.</b></p>	<p>The adoption and implementation of the Residential Experience Standards (RES) Survey to allow the strengthening of our program delivery by embedding evidence-based and sector-benchmarked frameworks for measuring students' residential experiences.</p>	<p><i>St Hilda's utilises the RespectX platform as an anonymous reporting and case management system. RespectX will enable St Hilda's to report to University of Melbourne on the key requirements under Standard 6 of the Code.</i></p> <p><i>St Hilda's has a legally binding agreement with the University of Melbourne that provides clear expectations on reporting frequency.</i></p>

### Additional Actions from Whole-of Organisation Assessment

- Amend the annual Orientation Week survey to collect information on sense of belonging, safety, and reporting pathways.

# Glossary

## Source Note

*The definitions in this glossary are provided for the purposes of this Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan. They are informed by the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence, Australia's national framework for preventing violence against women (Change the Story, Our Watch), the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032, and established practice within Australian higher education and residential college settings. The glossary is intended to support shared understanding of key terms as they are used within this Plan and does not replace or supersede any legislative or regulatory definitions.*

### **Accountable Leadership and Governance**

The systems, structures and processes through which the College's governing body and senior leadership exercise oversight, set expectations, allocate responsibility, monitor performance and ensure compliance with the National Code and relevant legislation.

### **Additional Actions**

Actions identified through the Whole-of-Organisation assessment that go beyond minimum compliance with the National Code and are designed to strengthen prevention, response, evaluation and continuous improvement.

### **Bystander Intervention**

Evidence-based approaches that build the skills and confidence of individuals to safely challenge, interrupt or respond to behaviours and attitudes that contribute to gender-based violence or disrespectful conduct.

### **Change the Story**

Australia's national framework for preventing violence against women, developed by Our Watch, which identifies the gendered drivers of violence and informs primary prevention approaches.

### **Code (National Higher Education Code)**

The National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence, which sets mandatory standards and requirements for higher education providers and student accommodation providers.

### **Discloser**

A person who shares information about an experience of gender-based violence, whether formally or informally, and whether or not they choose to make a report or complaint.

### **Disclosure**

The act of sharing information about an experience of gender-based violence. A disclosure does not require a formal complaint or investigation.

### **Early Intervention**

Actions taken to identify, respond to and address concerns at an early stage to prevent escalation, reduce harm and support wellbeing.

## **Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**

Violence, abuse or harmful behaviour directed at an individual because of their gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, or that disproportionately affects women and gender-diverse people. This includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, coercive control and other related behaviours.

## **Gendered Drivers of Violence**

The social and structural factors that create and reinforce gender inequality and increase the likelihood of violence against women, as defined in Change the Story.

## **Gender Equality**

Involves equality for people of all genders. This term is used in the substantive sense to mean not only equality of opportunity but also equal or just outcomes (sometimes also called equity). It requires the redistribution of power, resources and responsibilities between men and women in particular, and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures that create and sustain gender inequality.

## **Mandatory Requirements**

Obligations set out in the National Code that student accommodation providers must meet, including requirements relating to governance, training, reporting, risk assessment, support and data collection

## **Primary Prevention**

Actions aimed at preventing gender-based violence before it occurs by addressing underlying drivers, norms and behaviours.

## **Respondent**

A person whose behaviour is the subject of a disclosure, report or investigation relating to gender-based violence.

## **Response**

The actions taken by the College following a disclosure or report, including risk assessment, safety planning, support provision, referrals, information sharing and disciplinary processes where required.

## **Risk Assessment**

A structured process undertaken by trained and appropriately qualified staff to assess immediate and ongoing safety risks following a disclosure or report of gender-based violence.

## **Safe Environments and Systems**

The physical, digital, policy and operational systems that reduce risk, support safety and enable appropriate prevention and response within the residential setting.

## **Safety and Support**

Trauma-informed, person-centred practices that prioritise the safety, wellbeing and agency of those affected by gender-based violence, including access to internal and external support services.

**Trauma-Informed Practice**

An approach that recognises the prevalence and impact of trauma, prioritises safety and choice, avoids re-traumatisation, and supports empowerment and recovery.

**Whole-of-Organisation Approach**

An approach that embeds prevention and response to gender-based violence across all areas of the organisation, including governance, leadership, staff, students, systems, culture and partnerships.

**Whole-of-Organisation Assessment**

A structured assessment of enablers, systemic risks and barriers across key areas of operation, undertaken to inform the development, implementation and continuous improvement of the Prevention and Response Plan.



St Hilda's College

THE UNIVERSITY *of* MELBOURNE ——— EST. 1964

**Whole-of-Organisation Assessment**

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

# Executive Summary

This Whole-of-Organisation Assessment has been developed to meet the requirements of the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and reflects St Hilda's College's strong commitment to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive residential environment for all members of its community. The assessment adopts an evidence-informed, whole-of-community approach aligned with Change the Story and the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032, recognising the gendered drivers of violence and the intersecting forms of inequality that can compound risk. It identifies key enablers, systemic risks, barriers and priority actions across seven areas of operation relevant to residential colleges.

St Hilda's College demonstrates a range of significant strengths and enablers that underpin its prevention and response approach. Central to this is a clearly articulated values framework centred on respect, belonging, growth, challenge and *communitas*, which is embedded consistently across leadership practices, service delivery, policies and student life. Senior residential staff bring deep experience and sector leadership to this work, contributing actively to intercollegiate, university-wide and national initiatives focused on preventing and responding to gender-based violence. The College's tiered residential wellbeing model, comprising Residential Advisors, Senior Residential Advisors, Senior Residential Staff and professional after-hours support, prioritises early intervention, clear escalation pathways and appropriate role boundaries between students and staff. St Hilda's also delivers robust education and primary prevention programming, including consent and respectful relationships education, bystander intervention training, masculinities-focused programs, and intersectional, cultural and accessibility awareness initiatives. These efforts are reinforced by strong student awareness of reporting pathways, including high levels of familiarity with the RespectX anonymous reporting and case-management platform. The College's use of evidence-based tools and partnerships, including collaboration with Our Watch, The Man Cave, UMSU Sexual Harm Response Team, Cairnmillar Institute, and participation in national evaluations such as QuikFix Good Night Out and the Residential Experience Standards, further strengthens its approach. Governance and accountability are supported through Board oversight, gender-based violence-related KPIs, and the recognition of GBV as an institutional risk.

The assessment also identifies several systemic risks inherent to the residential college context. These include the elevated risk of gender-based violence in communal living environments, particularly during transition periods and social activities involving alcohol; the annual turnover of students and the arrival of new and mid-year entrants with varied prior exposure to respectful relationships education; and power imbalances between staff and students, senior and junior students, and elected student leaders and non-leaders. Additional risks arise from exposure to online environments and social media that can normalise misogynistic or harmful attitudes, reliance on external contractors, and volunteers who may not consistently receive the same training or induction, and capacity constraints associated with a small senior staff team during periods of heightened demand or concurrent critical incidents.

Several barriers to effective prevention and response are also acknowledged. These include broader societal norms around alcohol consumption that can undermine harm-minimisation efforts, tensions between privacy, autonomy and the ability to monitor or intervene in online or informal student spaces, and the strong sense of loyalty and belonging within the community that may discourage speaking up or challenging peers. Competing academic, work, and personal commitments can limit student engagement in training and development opportunities, while physical infrastructure constraints require careful balancing of safety and privacy considerations.

In response to these findings, St Hilda's College has identified a set of forward-focused actions to strengthen its whole-of-organisation approach. These include expanding bystander intervention training to all students and staff, implementing additional intersectional and cultural awareness training, delivering evidence-based gender-specific prevention programs alongside masculinities initiatives, strengthening contractor onboarding and reporting expectations, and enhancing data collection and evaluation through tools such as Orientation surveys and Residential Experience Standards benchmarking. The establishment of a gender-based violence advisory group with staff and student representation will further support accountability, continuous improvement, and shared ownership of prevention efforts.

Overall, this assessment finds that St Hilda's College has a strong foundation of leadership, culture, systems and service delivery aligned with sector best practice for preventing and responding to gender-based violence. The actions identified will strengthen consistency, address identified risks and barriers, and support ongoing improvement in creating a safe, respectful and inclusive residential community.

# Introduction

This whole-of-organisation assessment provides a clear and evidence-informed overview of St Hilda's 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 St Hilda's College as they may align with areas defined in the National Code:

1. *Leadership, culture and environment*
2. *Structures, norms and practices*
3. *Systems and infrastructure*
4. *Service delivery*
5. *Policies and procedures*
6. *Management and governance*
7. *Community engagement*

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

This assessment has been completed by senior management within the College (Principal, Dean and Associate Dean) who have oversight and responsibility for student wellbeing and support. The assessment has been informed by the following sources of information and feedback:

- The College's annual student survey which seeks feedback on policy awareness and accessibility
- Results from a student survey conducted by Moore's Legal (the College's third-party experts used to develop and update its policy framework). The survey aggregated 238 responses across the 7 affiliated Colleges of the University of Melbourne, of which 47 respondents were from St Hilda's. The survey respondents included a diverse representation including students from the LGBTIQ+ community, from culturally diverse backgrounds and also those who have experienced GBV.
- Results from 3 focus group workshops conducted by Moore's Legal across 7 affiliated Colleges of the University of Melbourne. The workshops included student leaders as well as senior staff who hold existing responsibilities for preventing and responding to GBV within their communities.
- A prevalence survey undertaken at the beginning of 2025 via RespectX, the College's case management and anonymous reporting tool.
- Feedback and questions from 3 community briefings facilitated by internal staff and held for all students at St Hilda's College.

# Area of operation: Leadership, culture and environment

St Hilda's has a small staffing and leadership team comprising the Principal, Dean of Students and CFO as the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and with 10-12 professional staff reporting to the SLT across all functions of the College's operations. This does not include contractors (e.g. catering and cleaning), part-time academics as sessional tutors, or student positions as Residential Advisors. The Principal is responsible to the Board. The student body also elects a student representative leadership group (the General Committee). St Hilda's is proud of its collaborative approach to building positive culture which sees a strong connection and shared vision between staff and student leaders.

## Enablers

- Three senior residential staff with over a decade of experience each working in residential settings and focusing on primary prevention and response to GBV. One staff member has held previous professional roles in community health with a specific focus on the primary prevention of GBV.
- Senior leaders also contribute to broader sector leadership and cultural change with respect to GBV. St Hilda's Staff currently:
  - Chair the University of Melbourne intercollegiate Heads Group
  - Hold membership in the intercollegiate Student Wellbeing and Respect Committee
  - Hold membership in the University of Melbourne GBV Steering Committee
  - Hold membership in the University of Melbourne GBV Respect Reference Group
  - Co-Chair the University of Melbourne of College's Prevention and Response Community of Practice
  - Hold Vice-Presidency of University College's Australia
- St Hilda's benefits from a strong and positive relationship between students, student leaders and residential staff.
- St Hilda's has implemented an evidence-based wellbeing model based on early intervention principles for youth mental health. This includes a residential staff ratio of 8 on-site staff per 30 students where all residential staff are trained in:
  - Primary prevention and response to GBV
  - Mental and physical health first aid
  - Drug and alcohol harm minimisation
  - Bystander intervention
- St Hilda's engages CONSTANT as a professional provider of after-hours safety, wellbeing and crisis response. This necessarily means that student leaders are not responsible for after-hours support and response.
- St Hilda's senior management has lead the establishment of several partnerships with key expert vendors and co-designed and/or piloted programs with them including:
  - Our Watch on the Gendered Drivers of Violence within Residential Communities that is being utilised nationally for residential training.
  - ManCave and Transform on increasing emotional literacy, exploring the full spectrum gender identities and the impacts of rigid notions of gender identities, facilitating healthy and vulnerable conversations between students of all genders.
  - Sexual Harm Response Team within UMSU at the University of Melbourne for their Masculinities Project (an evidence based program developed with Monash University) challenging and redefining modern perceptions on masculinity.

- St Hilda's engages a variety of training providers and professionals to upskill students, student leaders and staff in both prevention and response of GBV and a training matrix has been attached to this document.
- St Hilda's senior management worked with RespectX to develop its anonymous reporting tool in the context of residential communities, including the development of its wellbeing case-management system.
- St Hilda's holds key health, wellbeing and inclusivity focused campaigns annually which offer training and educational opportunities, including:
  - Respect Week
  - Women's and Men's Health Weeks
  - Reconciliation Week
  - Queer Education Week
- The St Hilda's student club representative body seeks to reflect the diversity of our community through representative positions including
  - A Co-President of differing genders model, mandating gender diversity in executive positions
  - A representative for our international students
  - A representative for our queer community
  - Representatives for our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community
  - A representative for students with accessibility needs (e.g. neurodiversity, physical needs, etc.)

## **Systemic Risks**

- According to findings from the Australian Human Rights Commission's "Change the Course" survey, residential college students are seven times more likely to be sexually assaulted compared to non-college students. The higher risk was attributed to the specific cultural norms, traditions, and attitudes prevalent in some residential college environments, which were seen as contributing to bullying, hazing, and predatory behavior.
- Our Watch research shows that 39% of women since the age of 15 have experienced violence, that 27% of women since the age of 15 have experienced violence, emotional abuse, or economic abuse by a cohabitating partner, that one in 3 women (31%) have experienced physical violence since the age of 15 and that one in 5 women (22%) have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.
- Our Watch research shows that one in 4 men in Australia aged 18 to 45 say they have used physical and/or sexual violence against an intimate partner.
- Historically, knowledge of GBV and focused training was only mandated for key residential staff positions. This has changed in the previous 3 years to include all staff and students but an ongoing risk will be ensuring ongoing engagement of all stakeholders and the scaling of this training to all members of our community at an appropriate level.
- Incoming students begin their college journey with very little knowledge of the factors driving GBV on the back of inconsistent Respectful Relationships education through the Primary and Secondary school system.

- St Hilda's is committed to ensuring our staff team are representative of the diversity of our community. However given the small team size, selecting a team that represents diversity in all its facets can be challenging.
- St Hilda's is home to a high representation of young adults who may identify as female and/or queer and/or culturally diverse and/or neurodiverse. The intersectional factors at play with respect to GBV necessarily puts these students at greater risk of experiencing GBV

## **Barriers**

- Given that most students leave after two years in residence, turnover presents challenges in maintaining a safe and respectful culture and ensuring ongoing commitment to addressing the drivers of GBV
- Each year St Hilda's welcomes in approximately 50% of students as new to the community. These students arrive having completed high school within communities with established norms and values that may not align with the College's expectations
- Given the timing of the passing of the Code within the latter stages of the academic year, this plan was not subject to the depth of consultation with residents and student leaders as St Hilda's would normally practice
- Residential staff and non-residential academic roles see high turnover of every few years and therefore generate an ongoing challenge in ensuring delivery and uptake of appropriate training and skills development
- A small senior residential staff team (of three) introduces challenges in availability of key decision makers
- Students are gaining greater awareness and knowledge of the drivers of GBV, however, there is a deficit in their ability and confidence to become an active bystander.

## **Key Actions in Response**

- For the past 3 years, we have offered bystander training to student leaders and residential staff. Moving forward, we will extend bystander training to all students and staff. The training will include the drivers of GBV, the 4 D's of intervention, trauma informed approach to disclosures and knowledge of support services.
- The introduction of an Accessibility Awareness Week and Cultural Awareness Week, shifting the underlying social conditions and norms that underpin violence through; 1) increasing literacy about respectful behaviour and consent, 2) creating communities where discrimination is not tolerated, and 3) strengthening protective factors like belonging and inclusion
- Undertake a review of staff entitlements to determine opportunities for improving gender equity and those experiencing gender and family based violence.
- Create a gender-based violence advisory group that includes students and staff. This group will meet each semester to discuss this whole organisation plan, our actions, and review policies to create a more equitable environment.

- The introduction of an evidence-based gender-based violence program, Flip the Script with EAAA® program, to sit alongside our offering of the Masculinities Project. These programs aim to provide high-quality, research backed primary prevention for men and women, complement broader gender-based violence prevention strategies, enhance student safety and confidence, and align with national recommendations. It aims to educate women on the facts of sexual harm, affirm in them that sexual harm is never their fault, equip them with the tools to resist sexually coercive men, and empower them to stand up for their needs and desires.
- The implementation of on-boarding training in gender-based violence for non-residential tutors, ensuring that all casual academic staff understand their position in fostering safe and respectful environments. This will involve educating tutors on how to recognise, respond, and refer concerns appropriately.
- Partner with Our Watch, Man Cave and UMSU to monitor and evaluate the impact of primary prevention strategies in increasing the knowledge and capacity of our students and staff.
- The adoption and implementation of the Residential Experience Standards (RES) Survey to allow the strengthening of our program delivery by embedding evidence-based and sector-benchmarked frameworks for measuring students' residential experiences.
- The introduction of multicultural awareness training to improve our understanding of how culture, gender, sexuality, race, and disability shape people's experiences of inclusion, belonging, and safety.
- Amending the annual Orientation Week survey to collect information on sense of belonging, safety, and reporting pathways. This will allow for an early baseline insight into student experience, early identification of risks, and allow for the timely delivery of primary prevention strategies.

# Area of operation: Structures, norms and practices

St Hilda's College operates with a clearly defined values framework centred around respect, belonging, growth, challenge and *communitas*, which guides the structures, norms, and practices of the community. These values shape the culture that is created by students and staff, and are grounded in a shared responsibility for wellbeing and inclusivity. Our leadership modelling is central to creating an environment where education, foundations of trust and relationships are prioritised, with Senior Residential Staff, Senior Residential Advisors, Residential Advisors, and student leaders working collectively to create a respectful and safe space for all. Cultural expectations of our students are reinforced prior to students arriving through structured student interviews, upon arrival through orientation training, and regularly throughout the year through ongoing education and training, regular block meetings, one-on-one check-ins, and the use of supportive tools such as RespectX. This allows for strong primary prevention to be embedded into our practices, and multiple touch-points for early intervention. Together, the structure of St Hilda's aims to prioritise safety, wellbeing, and respect for all students living in the community.

## Enablers

- A core value at St Hilda's, as expressed in our strategic plan, is respect for self and others. An ongoing strategic goal for the College is to embed and foster a culture of preventative wellbeing practices that provide holistic support to individuals and educate for community respect, safety and inclusivity.
- St Hilda's College is grounded in its values framework that centres around respect, belonging, growth, challenge, and *communitas*. These values are translated into everyday practice by:
  - **Visible Leadership Modelling:** Senior Residential Staff, SRAs, and RAs actively demonstrate inclusive language, respectful attitudes and behaviour, and constructive conversations around managing conflict and relationships in community.
  - **Integration into Community Programming:** The values framework is integrated into our orientation of new students, block meetings, leadership development programs, academic mentoring, wellbeing initiatives, and everyday conversations to reinforce our expectations of our community.
  - **Shared Responsibility for Culture:** Students work closely with staff to take collective ownership of creating a safe, respectful and inclusive culture through peer-led initiatives, student leadership roles, and the continuous challenging of traditions and events annually.
  - **Preventative Wellbeing Model:** There is regular engagement between students and staff through structured regular "check-ins" to ensure early intervention conversations related to both respect and holistic wellbeing. Check-ins role model, respect and deep listening and empower students to reflect, seek support and establish actions to promote wellbeing.
  - **Inclusion and Belonging:** Wellbeing initiatives, communications, and all residential events and practices are designed intentionally so that students of all backgrounds, genders, identities, and cultures feel included and have a sense of belonging.
  - **Anonymous Reporting Tool:** The College uses RespectX to provide an anonymous reporting tool to students that allows two-way communication. This reinforces respect and safety by providing students with the ability to raise concerns without the fear of social consequences. 99% of students in 2025 confirmed they were aware the tool existed and how to access it.

- **Challenge by Choice:** The College empowers students to participate in events and experiences that align with their comfort and boundaries, creating an environment that supports autonomy, individual wellbeing, and psychological safety.
- **Signposting inclusivity:** The college actively signals its commitment to celebrating diversity, inclusivity and respect through both practical and environmental visibility, including non-gendered toilet signage, pride and consent-education materials displayed across the college, a pride-themed skylight in the library, Indigenous artwork and cultural references, accessible and free sanitary products in the bathrooms, diverse representation in student leadership, inclusive website content, and the provision of a queer leadership scholarship. All of these aim to reinforce that every student is safe, respected, welcome, and valued within the community.
- St Hilda's has a robust structure for supporting students that includes:
  - **Residential Advisors (RAs)** : RAs are 3rd year students who are employed by the College. They are custodians of positive, healthy, inclusive, respectful and safe college culture by promoting and facilitating wellbeing initiatives in collaboration with staff and external providers. RAs are responsible for driving student engagement of Wheel of Wellbeing initiatives. They also collaborate with SRAs to promote and foster safe, inclusive and respectful block culture by organising block activities that create a sense of belonging. While RAs are not responsible for the direct support of students with wellbeing concerns, they are equipped to advise students on College support structures and the promotion of the College's anonymous reporting tool. Importantly, student leaders are NOT responsible for developing or delivering training or responding to/managing individual student wellbeing concerns. The training provided to this tier of student leader focuses on recognising and referring students to professional staff when needed.
  - **Senior Residential Advisors (SRAs):** SRAs are part-time residential staff that provide an additional layer of leadership, and support and mentorship within the community. They support the Residential Advisors in coordinating community-wide student wellbeing initiatives and are responsible for mentoring and supporting students. SRAs are allocated a block of students and meet with all members of this block twice a semester to support their integration into college life, their personal and professional development, and understand their holistic wellbeing. SRAs are not responsible for managing complex student issues, but instead act as a more senior liaison between the student cohort and senior residential staff. They promote respectful, healthy, safe college culture, and are responsible for maintaining visibility of expectations in safe, inclusive, and respectful behavior in the community.
  - **CONSTANT:** This professional contract service is considered an extension of the wellbeing staff team and engages with students after hours by responding to after-hour calls for basic support with student needs. Their role is to ensure safety of the community through visibility and reassurance during periods when residential staff are not actively available. Any behavioural, safety, or wellbeing concerns identified after-hours are supported by these staff members, and escalated in line with established protocols to senior residential staff when required.
  - **Senior Residential Staff:** the Principal, Dean and Associate Dean form the core of St Hilda's wellbeing support system. They are responsible for responding to student disclosures, supporting students, managing wellbeing concerns, responding to critical incidents, facilitating referrals to specialised support, and managing systems such as Respect X to monitor whole community wellbeing. These staff members coordinate training for all staff and students, design and implement College wellbeing educational programs, and are responsible for ensuring compliance with the university and legislative requirements.

- St Hilda's College takes a multi-faceted approach to ensuring the education, capacity building and discussion of safety and wellbeing with residents and staff. This includes:
  - Pre arrival onboarding module.
  - Signposting and the display of health promotion educational resources on the grounds of the College.
  - Orientation program provides knowledge and capacity development of Primary Prevention, Early intervention and response to GBV and introduces this through expert trainers and service providers.
  - Whole community communication and educational initiatives, including whole community training (e.g. Active Bystander Intervention and Response) and weekly in-person announcements.
  - Sub-community communication within ~30 student blocks who meet fortnightly with residential staff to discuss upcoming events and activities as well as any community expectations arising from trends, feedback or observations in the community.
  - Individual communication and support provision through one-on-one check-ins at least twice per semester for all students with a residential staff member.
  - Regular check ins with senior staff upon the request of students .
- St Hilda's embeds gender equality, respect, diversity and inclusion throughout the year's educational offerings. Student Leaders complete an extensive array of training (see training appendix). The St Hilda's Orientation program offers extensive training for new students including, Consent and Respectful Relationships, Bystander intervention training, First Nations Cultural Awareness Training, Multicultural Awareness Training, LGBTQIA+ Allyship training and Neurodiversity awareness training. Throughout the year, an array of whole community educational events are held E.g. Respect Week, Cultural Awareness Week, Accessibility Week, Women's Health Week, Men's Health Week, Queer Education Week, Sexual and Reproductive Health workshops, Pride night, First Nations Cultural awareness training level 2, Wear it Purple Day, Harmony Day, International Women's Day. All Wheel of Wellbeing initiatives are educational, often celebrating the diversity within the St Hilda's community. They aim to build knowledge and capacity, develop skills in emotional literacy, empathy, broaden world views and develop healthy and respectful attitudes and behaviours.
  - Our Senior Residential Advisors (SRAs) are available on an ongoing basis for the students in their assigned block but are not limited to their blocks. SRAs formally meet with all students twice a semester for a 'check in', however, students can and do opt to meet more regularly.
- The importance of respect is signposted prior to the students arriving through our College website design, social media, and all communications. We deliberately embed questions on diversity and inclusion and respectful relationships. Student interviews to clearly signal our values from the outset. Our student induction portal further delivers a values driven suite of educational modules for students prior to arrival. When students arrive, all students participate in a wide array of training all aimed to educate students on the College community's values and beliefs and clearly articulate behavioural expectations. Senior residential staff and SRAs meet with each student during orientation to discuss what it means to live in community, with this being followed up by one-on-one check ins twice across each semester.

- St Hilda's works closely with both the Residential Advisors and Student Club General Committee in the design and implementation of events, ensuring that they uphold our college values. All events also undergo a risk assessment that explicitly requires the consideration of respect, safety, and inclusivity.
- St Hilda's engaged Avyon Consulting (via [Kim Copeland](#)) to deliver specialised training to our senior residential staff, student leaders, and intercollegiate colleagues on the normalisation of deviance and trauma-informed, safety-first approaches to student support. This aimed to equip attendees with the confidence to identify emerging cultural risks, disrupt unsafe community norms, challenge existing traditions, and reinforce expectations regarding safety in a college setting.

## **Systemic Risks**

- Colleges across Australia must play a role in acknowledging that many communities in the sector have histories of disrespectful attitudes, behaviour and values. This includes cultures of hazing and an over emphasis on and an unhealthy relationship with alcohol as examples. While St Hilda's is proud of its current day culture after a focused period of reform, it acknowledges that some students from previous generations may have experienced cultures that would not live up to broader community expectations.
- Colleges welcome a large number of new students each year. Given the history outlined above and the representation of college settings in media and popular culture that reflects this historical reputation, some students may join a college community seeking to reinvigorate historical, disrespectful cultures either overtly or covertly.
- Student leaders are elected democratically to steward an independent and incorporated organisation. While St Hilda's benefits from a positive and collaborative relationship with its elected student leaders, the leadership positions necessarily rotate annually which can challenge continuity to a desired cultural direction.
- The existence of online forums, influential public figures and social media can normalise unhealthy and misogynistic behaviours by providing platforms where harmful ideologies can thrive unchecked. These platforms can radicalise users by validating aggressive or dehumanizing views of women, undermining efforts toward respectful relationships and prevention education. Their reach and anonymity make it easier to recruit vulnerable individuals and spread narratives that justify or excuse violence and given the age and stage of students living within college communities, they are at greater risk of exposure to this risk.
- As a college that permits the consumption of alcohol, St Hilda's has worked hard over the past 5 years to create a healthy culture around the consumption of alcohol and, in collaboration with students, implements training on harm minimisation and early intervention strategies. However, St Hilda's also acknowledges that consumption of alcohol can escalate and worsen the prevalence of violence and violent behaviour.
- Power imbalances are unavoidable and will always exist between key members of a college community. Staff have inherent and real power over junior staff, all staff over all students, returning students over new students, student leaders over non-leaders. This introduces a barrier to calling out behaviour, reporting incidents and seeking support.

## Barriers

- Acknowledging alcohol misuse and overuse as a factor that can worsen the prevalence of violence, a societal-level barrier exists with respect to driving positive cultural reform relating to the consumption and overuse of alcohol. Given the age and stage of students in a tertiary setting, this barrier may be more pronounced in colleges.
- Student cohorts and leaders will reasonably connect and communicate through social media and online chat platforms. Given the often anonymous nature of these platforms, norms and cultures displayed and modeled may not always meet community standards and while leadership oversight may help with this, there is a natural tension between this and privacy, censorship, autonomy and personal expression.
- St Hilda's, like most colleges, is proud of the sense of belonging that exists within its community. This can come with a sense of deep loyalty to both peers and even the college itself which may be a barrier to speaking up and challenging unhealthy norms.

## Key Actions in Response

- Implement Equality-focused training or programs including unconscious bias training, Multicultural awareness training and Gender Equity Victoria's 'Introduction to Gender Equity Training for staff and student leaders.
- Involvement in the QuickFix Good Night Out evaluation to strengthen our commitment to evidence-based prevention and improve our understanding of effective alcohol and drug harm-minimisation strategies.
- To increase the capacity for our senior residential staff to engage and work with young men, St Hilda's will coordinate an intercollegiate workshop through the ManCave designed to equip leaders in the community with the skills to connect with students and make meaningful change. This will include understanding modern men and the factors that shape their behaviour and wellbeing, recognising relationships as a protective factor in emotional development, learning practical strategies for building relationships with students, and creating a structured plan for embedding this in a college context.
- Provide training on normalisation of deviance to all residential staff to ensure greater understanding of cultural norms and challenging poor behaviour.

## Area of operation: Systems and infrastructure

To ensure reporting is simple and accessible, St Hilda's has implemented RespectX as a digital reporting and case management platform. This platform allows students to make formal reports and disclosures and remain anonymous if they prefer. Importantly, two way anonymous communication is possible through this platform which ensures disclosers are able to be provided information on appropriate support services without having to identify themselves, if they prefer. Additionally, the College's tiered and residential wellbeing team provides multiple trusted and trained staff members for students to make reports or disclosures in person if they prefer. Finally, St Hilda's policy frameworks make clear that if a student wishes to report or disclose within the University system, separate from the College, they are encouraged and supported to do so.

In addition to reporting pathways, the College also has strong physical infrastructure that reduces the risk of harm to students, particularly from external actors. This includes security and wellbeing presence after hours, a CCTV surveillance system and a digital access (fob) system with clear access rights and controls in place.

### Enablers

- St Hilda's has adopted RespectX as its centralised case management anonymous reporting tool. RespectX adopts MFA for access and is ISO27001 accredited. RespectX allows for two-way reporting while the reporter remains anonymous and strict access control rights are in place to manage privacy of reporters.
- While students can make disclosures or reports through the RespectX platform, our tiered wellbeing system allows for students to make disclosures in person to staff who are clearly identified and trained to receive such-in person disclosures.
- Internet access is provided through UoM infrastructure and by extension we are subject to University of Melbourne policy on access rights. St Hilda's has also taken additional measures through network security platforms to block access to criminal websites. The College also has an IT and computer use policy in place outlining expectations of appropriate behaviour of users.
- St Hilda's residential staff structure ensures regular oversight of resident events, student wellbeing and behaviour. With 8 staff living on-site, integrated within the community and who share meals with students and attend events. The College wellbeing structure allows for prevention and early intervention (e.g. calling out poor behaviour) as well as crisis response. Beyond the regular presence of staff, a senior staff member is always available for escalation of serious incidents and the team is supported by CONSTANT who resources an active (awake) staff member from 6pm - 4am each day.
- St Hilda's has CCTV cameras covering all key entry/exit points and common areas within the college.
- St Hilda's has strong physical security measures including individual electronic fob access to each student room (every room requires at least two security touch points prior to possible entry) and the ability to remotely lock-down the whole site. Access to rooms is controlled on a need-to-have basis only with only SLT, after-hours responder, maintenance and cleaning staff having default access to rooms. No students have access rights to any other student room.
- Residential staff and student meetings occur within multiple available common spaces and access to staff dwellings is not permitted for students.

## **Systemic Risks**

- While St Hilda's has access controls in place for access to criminal websites, for example, it is difficult to completely eliminate the risk of community members accessing websites or platforms that propagate a culture of violence or disrespect towards women.
- While the College has strong physical security measures in place, the possibility of "tailgating" access in to college grounds presents a risk.
- St Hilda's uses external contractors for security, maintenance, cleaning, and other services which can create inconsistent expectations, training, and reporting standards, increasing the risk of uneven response to safety and breaches of confidentiality.

## **Barriers**

- There are difficulties in balancing physical privacy with natural surveillance and St Hilda's opts not to include CCTV cameras in personal or private spaces (e.g. student rooms, bathrooms).

## **Key Actions in Response**

- Review the onboarding and training expectations for all contractors, including mandatory primary prevention, safety and respect training, compliance requirements, and regular checks to ensure that external providers understand and comply with our wellbeing, reporting, and behavioural standards. In this, create a simple, mandatory reporting form for contractors to note safety incidents, environmental risks, or concerning behaviour, to ensure consistent approaches.
- Utilise professional voices such as Daniel Principe in the provision of education to residents on respectful, lawful, and safe use of online platforms, including guidance on online content and pornography that may reinforce harmful gender stereotypes.

## **Area of operation: Service Delivery**

St Hilda's is a residential community that provides holistic student support through the integration of housing, academic support, wellbeing support, personal development, and community engagement. These services are delivered through both residential staff such as our Residential Advisors (RAs), Senior Residential Advisors (SRAs), Associate Dean, Dean of Students, and Principal, as well as non-residential staff such as our non-residential tutors, community engagement managers, and alumni, ensuring students have varied and tiered pathways for both connection and support. Our wellbeing team is structured in a purposeful way, ensuring that staff are allocated to each block which allows for early identification of concerns through continuous connection, role modelling of expectations, and the regular communication of community expectations. This residential support is further strengthened through our external partnership with Cairnmillar, a local psychology clinic through which we have an MOU that aims to minimise barriers to accessing support such as cost and wait times. St Hilda's also delivers a formalised academic program facilitated through weekly subject-specific tutorials, while career and professional development is facilitated through Hilda's Head Start program encompassing a variety of workshops, networking events, leadership training, and industry connection. Alongside these offerings, students participate in a wide array of extracurriculars including intercollegiate sports, cultural activities, arts programs, and social events that are co-designed with the St Hilda's College General Committee, our student leadership team. All of these activities reflect the college's values and aim to create a sense of belonging and connection among residents. The College's offerings are complemented further by cleaning services, full catering, and wi-fi provision, allowing students to focus their time on holistic development while at college.

### **Enablers**

- St Hilda's offers an integrated residential support model that provides housing, wellbeing support, academic support, community engagement, and development opportunities in a central environment. Additionally, the purposeful placement of residential staff allows for early identification of concerns, role-modelling of behaviours, and reinforcement of community expectations in a timely manner.
- St Hilda's has an MoU and priority service agreement with The Cairnmillar Institute as providers of professional psychological support, reducing wait times and financial barriers for accessing support.
- The St Hilda's wellbeing system uses a collaborative and tiered approach to ensure accessibility. Leveraging student RAs, part-time SRAs, and full-time Senior Residential Staff, students are provided with multiple pathways for support. Staff are present during the week and are present at student events and activities, allowing for greater opportunities to connect and check in with students.
- The College prioritises preventative practice through embedding regular check-ins twice a semester, early-intervention conversations, and leadership development programs that target support during key periods of the year.
- St Hilda's fosters a strong block culture through creating structured connections led by each block's SRA and RA team. This team builds a sense of belonging through facilitating a weekly supper for connection and announcements, where reminders regarding support mechanisms and college expectations can be reinforced. Beyond this, SRAs and RAs hold individual mentor meetings with students to guide and support them across all aspects of college life - from wellbeing and social integration all the way through to vocational and academic development. The consistent and personalised engagement for all students improves trust and allows for early identification of supports needed for students to thrive within the residential environment.

- Regular signposting through announcements, posters about reporting pathways, and message boards, coupled with residential staff and student leaders who meet frequently as a team, ensures that there is consistent, whole-community messaging that reinforces expectations of respect, safety, and help-seeking behaviour. Through continual contact, this structure also allows the College to easily embed messages regarding gender equality, diversity, and inclusion into conversations and practice through regular touchpoints such as Orientation Week, wellbeing team meetings, and check-ins.

## **Systemic Risks**

- In any given cohort, members of the community may see college accommodation as just the provision of housing as opposed to a community to which they have obligations to. Engaging this portion of a cohort imposes inherent difficulties.
- St Hilda's engages a variety of professionals, including but not limited to our alumni, for fireside career conversations, mentoring opportunities, and community events. These external volunteers will not necessarily have had the opportunity to engage with the training and educational opportunities provided to current day students.

## **Barriers**

- Students' personal schedules are very busy as they balance work, study and personal commitments. This can create challenges in engaging them in all training, educational and development opportunities.
- With only three full time senior residential staff, responding to multiple critical incidents at once may impact on the ability to provide timely support
- In any given year, St Hilda's will welcome a number of new students into the community in the middle of the year. These mid-year entrants will join the community without having completed the full suite of orientation training, and with a more limited understanding of expectations, practices, and community norms.

## **Key Actions in Response**

- Review existing contracts with vendors that have high contact/interface with student cohort and consider options for including additional training expectations and employment screening
- Review opportunities for consistent monitoring and evaluation of all education and training opportunities.

## Area of operation: Policies and Procedures

St Hilda's has a residential agreement (contract) in place that requires students to adhere to a suite of policies and standards. These include a code of conduct, alcohol and illicit substances and IT system use alongside a specific policy framework that addresses GBV. This GBV policy framework has been developed by Moores Legal as a third party expert advisor following consultation with both students and staff across 7 affiliated colleges at Melbourne. This consultation occurred in Q4 2025 to ensure requirements under the Code were included in the consultation process. This included surveys and focus groups covering >250 students and staff with demographic data showing participation from LGBTIQ+ students, First Nations students, students with disabilities and students with lived experience of GBV.

### Enablers

- The policy framework has been informed by detailed consultation of >250 students and staff across seven affiliated colleges, ensuring a diverse representation of voices in the process. The policy aligns directly with the requirements of the Code and is underpinned by a person-centred, trauma informed approach to responding to disclosures and reports of GBV.
- The policy framework allows for students to make a report through either the College or the University.
- The policy framework includes not only matters relating to GBV but also discrimination, bullying and harassment in an acknowledgement of the intersecting and overlapping nature of these issues.
- St Hilda's requires new and existing employees to declare current/previous intimate relationships as well as previous allegations/investigations relating to GBV. All employees are also required to hold a Working With Children's Check.
- 94% of students noted they are aware of the existing policy framework and where to find it.

### Systemic Risks

- The policy framework allows for the temporary and immediate relocation of a student following a report, based on the risk and impact of the incident, based on the choice/preference of the reporter. It can be difficult to source appropriate accommodation settings at short notice that do not introduce further risks to a new community or to the responder who must also be supported through a temporary relocation.
- While the College requires employees to make declarations relating to prior investigations/allegations, these declarations could be falsified.

### Barriers

- The affiliated colleges of UoM have a standalone policy separate from the University policy framework. The policy is specific to a residential setting and the relevant support services and pathways available within each affiliated college. However, as students should and are provided the opportunity to report/disclose through the university policy framework if they prefer, there may be barriers in ensuring any outcomes determined within a university process are communicated back to the College, especially where one of the parties involved may not be a college resident.

## **Key Actions in Response**

- Investigate opportunities for improving information sharing from the University to the College with respect to students entering the College after their first year of study who may have been subject to investigations or allegations in the context of their studies, through the separate and independent university processes and systems.
- Investigate opportunities for ensuring consistently available emergency accommodation for the purposes of temporary relocation of a respondent. This may involve collaborating with the university and/or other affiliated colleges.
- To minimise the likelihood and impact of a falsified declaration of a prior investigation/allegation by a potential employee, include specific and clear questions in reference checks for future employees that seek to validate the declaration made.

## Area of operation: Policies and Procedures

St Hilda's is governed by a Board of Directors, all of whom are volunteers. The Principal answers to the Board and the directors are recruited/appointed against a skills-matrix. There are two student directors on the Board and the Principal is the only executive director alongside nine non-executive directors. The governance structure includes key sub-committees. Of particular relevance is the Governance, Risk and Compliance Committee whose remit covers risk and policy frameworks. The current board includes a majority of female-identifying directors and one-third of current directors are non-alumni of the college, providing an external governance view.

### Enablers

- St Hilda's senior management team have a strong understanding of the drivers of GBV and a commitment to creating safe and respectful communities. The Principal and Dean are consistently called on to represent the Colleges of Melbourne within university-wide communities of practice and steering committees that focus on GBV. SLT also attend key GBV training each year alongside new staff regardless of whether refresher periods have expired for these training sessions.
- St Hilda's strategic plan sets respect, inclusion and safety as core values within our community. The strategic plan also identifies the importance of creating a diverse community experience as one of its core strategic focuses.
- The Principal's KPI's have included deliverables on the Code since late 2024.
- St Hilda's has a Governance, Risk and Compliance Committee that reports to the Board that is responsible for ensuring all policy frameworks are reviewed within appropriate windows. This committee also oversees the College's risk framework and organisational risk matrix. The risk matrix acknowledges incidents of GBV as an institutional risk and lists preventative measures as key controls.
- St Hilda's has a legally binding agreement with the University of Melbourne that includes a schedule specifically addressing the requirements and obligations under the Code.
- Over the past 5 years, St Hilda's has seen a marked increase of Primary Prevention of GBV and response initiatives embedded into the College's profession development and wellbeing program. The College is fortunate to receive unanimous support from the College board and financial support to implement the programs.
- The College's Board appoints directors based on a skills matrix that has diversity and inclusion identified as a key skill desired within the College's governance body.
- The Board has established a standing agenda item for SLT to provide updates and key outcomes in relation to the Code within the college setting.
- The Board includes student representatives to ensure the voice of students is captured and contributes to strategic decisions that include responding to the Code.

## **Systemic Risks**

- Ongoing prevention programs and activities require committed resourcing over a long period. Senior management needs to work closely with the College Board to maintain a strong commitment to these programs in the long term so that funding is not compromised if the College finds itself in a future position that requires it to make decisions about reducing resource allocations.

## **Barriers**

- Appropriate levels of regular Board renewal will see new Board members join every few years who may require upskilling and training on the Code, GBV and gender equality initiatives.
- Given the indirect nature of the legislative framework that underpins the Code (that is, Colleges are regulated via their host university), there may be confusion and complexity as to whether the College or the host University holds ultimate responsibility or decision making authority on various issues.

## **Key Actions in Response**

- Source and engage an expert training provider who offers training to governing bodies on GBV, gender equality and inclusion. Ensure all new directors are on-boarded with this training opportunity within one year of joining the board.
- Introduce KPIs for the Principal and key senior managers specific to ongoing GBV prevention programs and initiatives.

## Area of operation: Community engagement

St Hilda's core focus is its current staff and students. However, the student experience is enhanced by a number of key community partnerships. This includes alumni volunteering to contribute to our professional development, mentoring and employability programs as well as regular connections/visits/presentations with regional, rural and interstate schools from whom the majority of the College's applications originate. St Hilda's does not have any formal agreements in place with any specific schools and nor does it guarantee access or entry to any students from specific schools. St Hilda's is also pleased to have developed strong relationships with key community partners as experts in prevention of GBV.

### Enablers

- St Hilda's is fortunate to have very engaged alumni, many of whom have been highly supportive of our Primary Prevention initiatives and have participated in Gender Equity initiatives by providing women in leadership workshops.
- Over the past 3 years St Hilda's has established multiple industry partnerships with leading Prevention and Response organisations, including Our Watch, Man Cave, Monash University's DVC Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and UMSU Sexual Harm Response team. St Hilda's staff and students have benefited greatly from contributing to the development of college specific primary prevention of GBV resources.
- St Hilda's takes an intentional approach in their admissions process to ensure diversity of applicants in all facets as well as screening for values alignment and understanding. This includes, for example, questions relating to respectful relationships and diversity and inclusion.

### Systemic Risks

- We are proud to provide access to predominantly regional, remote and international students. We acknowledge that our students' knowledge of the prevention of Gender-based Violence and response is limited and varied when they join the St Hilda's community.

### Barriers

- Some alumni or external speakers may hold views and expectations shaped by historical college cultures or personal experiences that do not align with current values and cultural practice.
- We acknowledge that our students arrive with very little knowledge on GBV and our challenge is to educate on the prevalence and drivers of GBV, and the importance of GBV education for all staff and students.

### Key Actions in Response

- Engage key 3-4 feeder schools on understanding their culture and approach to educating for prevention of GBV to explore opportunities to create a continuity in educational experience between secondary and tertiary settings.
- Review our marketing and recruitment collateral to ensure they directly address our expected cultural norms and values relating to respect, equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Formalise communication pathways with the University's Safe Community Programs/CAPS/wellbeing offices for clarity in escalation, student support, reporting, etc.

**APPENDIX 2**

**Declaration Form – Confidential**

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, please 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, please name the resident/s:**

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Print Name

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Date

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Signature

St Hilda's College - Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Training

Training	Provider	Educational Outcomes	Compulsory Y/N	First Year Students	Returning Students	Student Leaders	Res Staff	Senior Res Staff	Day Staff
Intercollegiate Staff Training Leading Safe, Inclusive and Accountable College Environments	Avyon Consulting / Kim Copeland	Safety-first and trauma informed principles Responding to student safety, wellbeing and risk Gender-based violence, hazing and harmful traditions Leading cultural change	Y					✓	
Residential Staff Training - Contributing to Safe, Inclusive and Accountable College Environments	Avyon Consulting / Kim Copeland	Safety First and Trauma informed principles Impacts of stress and trauma Responding to Student safety, wellbeing and risk Providing support or responding to a disclosure Hazing continuum: Challenging traditions and culture Leading cultural change	Y				✓	✓	
Intercollegiate Student Leadership Training - Contributing to a Safe and Inclusive College Environment	Avyon Consulting / Kim Copeland	Safety First approach Trauma informed approach Gender-Based violence Hazing continuum and hazing prevention Normalisation of deviance Setting healthy, respectful college culture	Y			✓	✓	✓	
Post-Disclosure Risk Assessment Training	Code Black Psychology	Trauma informed, people-centred approach to completing a risk assessment following a disclosure	Y				✓	✓	
Student Pre-arrival induction portal	St Hilda's	Understanding of gender based violence, reporting pathways and SAFE policy and anonymous reporting tool RespectX, LGBTQIA+, Multicultural and First Nations education.	Y	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Primary Prevention of GBV in residential colleges	Our Watch	Definition of Gendered Violence Understanding the Gendered Drivers of Violence What does GBV look like in residential colleges?	Y	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## St Hilda's College - Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Training

Training	Provider	Educational Outcomes	Compulsory Y/N	First Year Students	Returning Students	Student Leaders	Res Staff	Senior Res Staff	Day Staff
Creating a Consent Culture	CASA House	Definitions of Gender Based Violence and Australian prevalence Rape culture and consent Culture Consent Framework Trauma informed practice and Crisis response Responding to disclosures and myths	Y			✓	✓	✓	
Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Assault	CASA House	Understanding sexual assault and its context Understanding impacts of sexual assault Trauma informed practice Responding to disclosures Consent and pathways for support Professional considerations	Y			✓	✓	✓	✓
Gender Based Violence	Elephant Ed	Consent and respectful relationship Gender-based violence statistics Power dynamics and drivers of GBV Examining a culture that exists Upstanding and being an ethical bystander (scenario work) Support pathways and reporting	Y	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Consent Part 2	Elephant Ed	Revise the legalities relating to sexual consent, including age of consent, free and voluntary agreement and affirmative consent Coercive Control and power dynamics in relationships Strategies to communicate consent and personal boundaries.	Y	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Sexual Harm Policy	Moores Legal	Overview of College SAFE policy. Safety first and trauma informed approach to supporting disclosures. Support services.	Y	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
SAFE Contact officers Training	Moores Legal	Training of SAFE Coordinators in Safety first, trauma informed approach to supporting student disclosures	Y				✓	✓	
SAFE Coordinators Training	Moores Legal	Training of SAFE Coordinators in Safety first, trauma informed approach to supporting student disclosures	Y					✓	

## St Hilda's College - Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Training

Training	Provider	Educational Outcomes	Compulsory Y/N	First Year Students	Returning Students	Student Leaders	Res Staff	Senior Res Staff	Day Staff
Bystander Intervention for student leaders	Sexual Harm Response: UMSU	Rates of GBV, Pyramid of Violence Coercion, Consent and the Spectrum of Violence 4D's of Bystander Intervention and barriers to intervention Responding to disclosures and Support Services	Y	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Intimacy workshop	Elephant Ed	Explore the correlation between intimacy, relationships and sexual activity. Exploring different types of intimacy, including physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual Intimacy scale, reinforcing everyone's preferences are unique and should be respected Scenario-based discussion reinforcing the importance of negotiation and communication	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bystander intervention & Responding to disclosures	Sexual Harm Response: UMSU	Analyse behaviours and attitudes using the pyramid of violence framework Recognise sexual coercion and understand their relationship to consent Identify when consent can't be provided, particularly in relation to alcohol consumption Apply the 4Ds bystander intervention model : Direct, Distract, Delay, Delegate Evaluate situations to determine safe and appropriate intervention strategies Disclosures and formal reports, understanding the victim-survivor's right to choose their next steps and accessing support services Trauma responses including fight, flight, freeze, and fawn Barriers that prevent people from disclosing experiences of sexual violence Responding to disclosures: Applying the LIVES model (Listen, Inquire, Validate, Enhance Safety, Support Networks) Referral pathways to appropriate support services both within and external to the University Setting boundaries, role and scope as students and how to get support for a friend. Understand Privacy considerations and confidentiality	Y		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RespectX Anonymous Reporting Tool	RespectX & St Hilda's College	Overview of St Hilda's anonymous reporting tool RespectX and College support structures and external support organisations	Y	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## St Hilda's College - Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Education

Training	Provider	Educational Outcomes	Compulsory Y/N	First Year Students	Returning Students	Student Leaders	Res Staff	Senior Res Staff	Day Staff
Flip the Script EAAA	Monash Uni & Sexual Harm Response: UMSU	Know how to assess Risk Acknowledge rights for safety and wellbeing Act: Defend body and boundaries Enhance: relationships, understand desires and preferences	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Masculinities Project	Monash Uni & Sexual Harm Response: UMSU	The spectrum of Masculinity, Gender, identity Consent and respectful relationships Emotional literacy Healthy relationships, Accountability Bystander action	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Community SpeakEasy	Man Cave	Active listening skills Emotional literacy Building empathy and connection Goal setting and honouring	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Transform whole day workshop	Man Cave	Emotional Literacy, Self reflection, impacts of gender norms on mental health and interpersonal relationships.	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Media and the impact on gender roles	Daniel Principe	Media and how it reinforces rigid gender stereotypes and condones violence. Impacts of porn on neural pathways and normalising GBV Healthy Masculinity and being a healthy man	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Sexual and Reproductive health	Dr Bianca Forrester	Women's hormonal cycle, contraceptive methods and efficacy Gender equity and reproductive health Sexual and reproductive health services	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
First Nations Cultural Awareness Training level 1	Aunty Tarrina Fanning	First Nations Language map of Australia First Nations Kinship Significant First Nations people	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

## St Hilda's College - Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Education

Training	Provider	Educational Outcomes	Compulsory Y/N	First Year Students	Returning Students	Student Leaders	Res Staff	Senior Res Staff	Day Staff
Mental Health First Aid for Tertiary students	Adrian Oats	Recognise the warning signs of mental health problems Respond across a range of crisis situations and offer support Reduce stigma and increase support for adults experiencing mental health problems.	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
First Nations Cultural Awareness Training # 2	Aunty Tarrina Fanning	Significant cultural events in First Nations history Impacts of colonisation Celebrating Naidoc and Reconciliation Week at St Hilda's	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multicultural Awareness Training	Centre for Multicultural Youth	Celebrating cultural diversity Understanding unconscious bias CALD student support services	Y	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Neurodiversity Training	Neurodiversity Project: Uni Melb	Understanding neurodiversity and creating a culture of respect Support structures for neurodiverse students	Y	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Men's Health Workshop	Men's health GP	Men's reproductive Health Men's mental health Men's health support services	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Introduction to Gender and sexuality training 101	Minus 18	Intro to LGBTQIA+ terms and identities. Key concepts of sex, gender and sexuality. Barriers LGBTQIA+ people face and accessing services. Practical tools to be an LGBTQIA+ ally to create an inclusive culture	Y	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Supporting the Trans and Gender Diverse Communities	Minus 18	Terms and the history of Trans & Gender Diverse identities. Gender expression and affirmation. Barriers, discrimination & lived experiences faced by Trans people Inclusive language and pronouns through real-world scenarios. Practical tips for creating inclusive spaces and workplace practices.	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
LGBTQIA+ Sexual & reproductive Health	Sexual Health Victoria	Understanding Gendered violence prevention and response Queer sexual health support services	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	