



**Union of Students in Ireland**  
*Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn*

**Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality**

**Supporting documentation for the Union of Students in Ireland presentation**

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### Recommendations

1. Ensure an anonymous reporting tool is available for staff and students to report any experience of sexual violence or harassment that they experience. We need to be able to support people to make reports and we need to have an understanding of what is happening across our campuses to be able to identify trends, challenge them and create safer campus environments where every student has the right to a safe learning environment and every staff member has the same right to a safe working environment.
2. Provide core funding to institutions to invest in hiring people with specific remits to work on tackling sexual harassment and violence within the institution. Also, invest in trauma-informed training needs to be provided to staff and student leaders. Everyone should have a basic knowledge of how to support someone who has made a disclosure.
3. Ensure support for the continuation of the great work that is being done by many across the sector including the NAC, Active\* Consent, Bystander Intervention Programmes and more. We need to ensure we can keep learning and contribute to this conversation on an international stage too – learning from international best practice and ensuring we develop initiatives, supports and programmes while considering that international best practice but with a local context at the fore of our minds.

The Sexual Experiences Survey 2020 Report can be found [here](#). This was the largest survey of its kind for students across third level education. The survey ran from February to April 2020 and was launched later that year. Key findings and recommendations are included within the report.

The Framework for Consent in Higher Education Institutions entitled “Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions” is available [here](#). This was launched by former Minister Mary Mitchell O’Connor in April 2019.

In 2020, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris wrote to Presidents of Irish Higher Education Institutions requiring them to submit their Institutional Action Plan in Q1 2021.

The Irish Universities Association (IUA) and the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) as representative bodies for the Universities and Technological Sector have both undertaken work in this area. The IUA Guidelines are available [here](#) and the THEA report will be launched on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2021, Active\* Consent, Galway Rape Crisis Centre and USI launched a campaign called “Start Here” which aims at giving staff and students the skills to support someone who makes a disclosure to them of unwanted sexual contact. More is available [here](#).