

# FAIR AGENDA

## University residences surveyed on training for sexual violence prevention, ahead of 2017 applications

### PRESS RELEASE 6 December 2016

As students apply for University residency for next year, community campaigning group Fair Agenda has released the initial results of a nation-wide survey regarding what, if any, sexual violence prevention training university residences will deliver in 2017.

“We’ve heard from students and parents who want to know what action is being taken to reduce sexual violence at universities” said Renee Carr, Executive Director of community campaigning group Fair Agenda.

“We know that training in consent and preventing sexual violence is a critical area of work needed to improve student safety. As the home-away-from home for so many students, residences are in a powerful position to lead positive action on campuses. But up until now there has been no easy way for students or parents to compare what’s being provided.”

“In September Fair Agenda launched a nation-wide survey of 217 university residences to help inform students and parents.” Ms Carr added.

Of the 217 Australian university residences approached by Fair Agenda, 93 have responded to the survey questions so far. Of those, 87 residences have indicated that they plan to provide training in sexual consent and preventing sexual violence to some or all students next year. But only 30 residences indicated that a sexual assault service would be involved in providing that training.

“It’s great to see that a significant number of residences are planning on providing some form of training to students and relevant staff. The responses we’ve had from a number of residences show that many are thinking about how they can step up in this area.” Ms Carr added.

“Unfortunately, the survey responses also reveal that a significant portion of residences still have room for improvement.”

“We’ve had some residences indicate to Fair Agenda that they aren’t interested in responding to our survey about their training. There are many more we’re still hoping to hear from.”

“By asking residences these questions we’ve already seen some improvements in policy.” Ms Carr noted. “Fair Agenda heard from one residence who initially wasn’t planning on providing any training, that is now investigating getting experts from the Full Stop Foundation in to run training, because Fair Agenda’s survey put the issue on their radar.”

“That’s exactly what this campaign is about – showing residences that there’s support for making the prevention of sexual violence a priority.” Ms Carr added.

“We know that this is an issue students and parents are concerned about. We encourage anyone planning on applying to a residence to ask them directly about what training they provide.”

Ms Carr also noted that “consent training is an important first step, but it’s not the last – supportive policies and practices around disclosure are also vital.”

A summary of the key results of Fair Agenda's residence survey are available at [www.fairagenda.org/residences](http://www.fairagenda.org/residences)

The full detailed responses from residences can be accessed via: [http://www.fairagenda.org/residences\\_survey\\_compare](http://www.fairagenda.org/residences_survey_compare)

## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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### **The survey numbers at a glance**

- Residences approached - **217**
- Residences that have responded so far – **93**
- Residences that indicated through their survey that they will provide any training to any students in 2017 - **87**
- Residences that have indicated they will provide training in sexual consent and preventing sexual violence to all students in 2017 – **77**
- Residences whose survey responses indicate they will involve a sexual assault service in provision of training for students in 2017 – **30**
- Residences whose survey responses indicate they will provide some or all of staff responsible for student welfare with training in preventing and responding to sexual violence in 2017 - **85**

### **About Fair Agenda**

Fair Agenda is a community of more than 35,000 Australians campaigning for fairness and equality for women. [www.fairagenda.org](http://www.fairagenda.org)

### **Third party quotes for context**

The following quotes can be attributed to Sharna Bremner, End Rape on Campus Australia (0401 026 249):

"End Rape on Campus Australia is hearing from students across the country who have been sexually assaulted - including in residences. We know that this is a problem; and making sure students are provided with training in consent and preventing sexual assault is a critical part of the solution"

"We hear from many so many students that there's a real desire to become better educated in this area. They don't feel they know what it means to get informed consent."

"What's more, it's absolutely critical that any staff responsible for student welfare receive training in how to provide an appropriate response to someone who has just been through this kind of trauma. Right now many staff are not equipped to respond appropriately - meaning that students who work up the courage to try and report what's happened to them are sometimes being re-traumatised through that process."

### **Background Information**

- Data from Our Watch ("*The Line*" report, 22 Feb 2016) shows a quarter of young people think it's 'normal' for a boy to pressure girls to perform sexual acts.
- In the 2015 'Talk About It' survey conducted by the National Union of Students, hundreds of students reported that they had had sexual intercourse when they felt unable to consent. Of the 1,000 respondents; 25% reported an unwanted sexual experience, and 7% reported that they had been raped.