



ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT IN IRISH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (“THE FRAMEWORK”)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In April 2019 the Minister of State for Higher Education published a Framework Policy document for HEIs entitled Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions (“The Framework”). The Framework requires each HEI to put structures in place to enable the effective implementation of the Framework’s outcomes. The key outcomes identified in the Framework (“Framework Outcomes”) are categorised under four headings as follows:

1. Effective Structures
2. Recording of Incidents
3. Institutional Policies
4. Targeted Initiatives.

1.2 In order to ensure the effective implementation of the key outcomes, it is appropriate that the University establish a Framework Steering Group charged with delivery of the outcomes of the Framework in a timely manner.

2. STRUCTURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FRAMEWORK

2.1 **Establishment of Framework Steering Group:** In common with other corporate-wide projects of strategic importance within the University, it is appropriate that this project is led by a Framework Steering Group (FSG). The FSG’s membership should be reflective of those functional areas within the University with responsibility for Framework related matters. Therefore a balanced membership of key stakeholders (academics, support services, administration and students’ unions) is proposed as follows:

- Vice President Academic Affairs & Student Engagement (Chairperson)
(Professor Nigel Healey)
- Associate Vice President Student Engagement (Dr Patrick Ryan)
- Associate Vice President Academic Affairs (Dr Ross Anderson)
- Director Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Dr Marie Connolly)
- University Solicitor (nominee of Corporate Secretary – Ms Caroline Keane)
- Head of Engagement Human Resources (Ms Anne Twomey)
- President of Student Life
- President of Postgraduate Students’ Union

2.1.1 The FSG may add new members as required subject to notification to Executive Committee. In addition, other individuals (both internal and external to the University) with required expertise may be invited to attend meetings of the FSG from time to time. Any associated costs must be agreed in advance with the head of the relevant functional area to which any costs will be charged.

2.2 **Role and Responsibilities of FSG:** The role of the FSG is to work collectively to oversee the implementation of the Framework and includes:

- Oversee the implementation of the Framework Outcomes through liaison with relevant stakeholders;
- Establish and oversee the work of such sub-committees established by the FSG as may be required to implement the provisions of the Framework;
- Review the progress of each sub-committee in implementing the Framework Outcomes on a regular basis and not less than quarterly;
- Review and approve the outputs of each sub-committee prior to finalisation;
- Agree on the invitation of internal and external persons including specialist agencies to be invited to meetings;
- Produce a quarterly report on progress to Executive Committee;
- Provide feedback on draft policies, templates and other materials;
- Such other matters as decided by the FSG from time to time subject to approval of Executive Committee.

2.3 **Role of Chairperson of FSG:** The Chairperson of the FSG is charged with ensuring meetings are chaired in a manner conducive to efficient and effective outcomes. Additionally, the Chairperson will:

- Ensure all members of the FSG are facilitated in contributing to the work of the FSG;
- Ensure the organisation of regular meetings of the FSG and manage the provision of secretarial service/support to the Group;
- Develop progress reports on the work of the FSG for consideration by the Executive Committee for submission on a quarterly basis.

2.4 **Reporting Requirements:** The FSG will report on progress in implementing the provisions of the Framework to the Executive Committee on a quarterly basis. The Executive Committee will report on matters to the Governing Authority's Finance, HR & Asset Management Committee and the Access, Equality & Student Affairs Committee on an annual basis.

2.5 **Sub-Committees:** Due to the existence of a one or more Committees currently that could support the work of the FSG, it is suggested that consideration be given to the establishment of/engagement with the following sub-committees:

1. **Policies Working Group:** charged with reviewing relevant University policies and guidelines for addressing complaints of a sexual/harassment nature to ensure consistency with the Framework. Where required the Policies Working Group should recommend revisions/drafts of new policies to the Head of Department of the functional area relating to that policy. Following consideration and updating of the policies by the Head of functional area, they will submit the revised/draft policy to Executive Committee for approval and inform the Policies Working Group of the submission.

2. **Sexual Health & Well-being Group:** This group should oversee the implementation of targeted initiatives and activities as set out in the Framework, to include delivery of workshops, classes and training that promote an understanding of consent. In consultation with the Policies Working Group, this Working Group is charged with the drafting of a UL Sexual Health and Wellbeing Policy and Implementation Plan (to include a protocol for crisis situations) for consideration in the first instance by the FST, then the Executive Committee. Once approved by the Executive Committee, the Policy should be submitted to the Governing Authority's Finance, HR & Asset Management Committee and the Student Access & Equality Committee for consideration and recommendation to Governing Authority for approval.