

Gender-based Violence Committee Charter

Establishment

- 1 The Gender-based Violence (GBV) Committee (**the Committee**) is established by the University Council (**Council**) in accordance with section 17 of the *University of Canberra Act 1989*, as a subcommittee of the Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) under resolution C261/20.

Purpose

- 2 The Committee will provide oversight, assurance, and advice to the ARMC and Council on matters relating to:
 - a. Compliance with the *National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025 (Cth)* ('National Code');
 - b. Progress toward compliance as outlined in the University's Whole-of-Organisation GBV Prevention and Response Plan and Outcomes Framework, including assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of the University's GBV response systems;
 - c. Monitoring deidentified GBV incident data to identify trends and assess investigation timeliness; and
 - d. Continuous improvement of UC's safety environment, including student accommodation, systems, culture, staff training and capability, consistent with the Code's standards.

Authority

- 3 The GBV Committee operates under delegated authority from the ARMC and may:
 - a. Access relevant University records, data, and personnel necessary to discharge its responsibilities;
 - b. Request reports and updates from management on GBV compliance, risk assessments, and incident trends;
 - c. Engage external experts where specialist advice is required; and,
 - d. Seek input from staff and student representatives, or their governance bodies, on matters within its remit.

Terms of Reference

4 The primary responsibilities of the Committee include:

- a. Compliance Oversight:
 - I. Monitor UC's compliance with the National Code and associated legislative requirements, including addressing any areas of partial or non-compliance; and;
 - II. Review and advise on the adequacy of policies, procedures, and governance structures related to GBV prevention and response.
 - III. Assure Council that UC's compliance posture addresses risks identified in UC's Risk Management Framework and appetite statement.
- b. Action Plan Progress:
 - I. Assess progress against UC's GBV Prevention and Response Plan and Outcomes Framework, including milestone delivery, resourcing, and capability building; and;
 - II. Ensure actions are implemented within agreed timelines and resources are allocated appropriately.
- c. Incident Monitoring:
 - I. Review de-identified data on GBV disclosures and formal reports;
 - II. Interrogate trends over time; and;
 - III. Identify systemic risks and recommend mitigation strategies.

5 Where there is a perceived overlap of responsibilities between committees of the Council, the respective Chairs will determine the most appropriate committee to consider the item, or alternatively to hold a special joint meeting of both committees.

Membership

6 The Committee shall comprise a minimum of four members, including:

- a. up to three members of the Council. The Council will appoint an external member of the Council as Chair;
- b. up to three student representatives, with at least one as recommended by the Student Representative Council.
- c. up to two independent external members with skills and experience relevant to the functions of the Committee; and;
- d. the Director Student Life.

7 The following officers shall have right of audience and debate at meetings of the Committee:

- a. Vice-Chancellor and President;
- b. the DVC and COO and the University Secretary;

- c. Director, Legal and Policy;
 - d. Associate Director, Student Accommodation.
- 8 Notwithstanding clause 7, members of the University Executive Group and any University staff (unless appointed by Council) may not be members of the Committee:
- 9 Members are appointed by the Council for a term not exceeding three years or their term on the Council (if applicable). Members may be reappointed at the end of a term. The maximum number of terms a member may be appointed is three consecutive appointments, or nine years, whichever is the lesser.
- 10 The Committee may temporarily co-opt other members of the Council to the membership of the Committee where it is necessary to do so to comply with clauses 8 and 25 of this Charter.
- 11 In appointing the membership of the Committee, the Council will have regard to the relevant skills and experience commensurate to the functions of the Committee, the University values and equity and diversity objectives, and the need for both continuity and regular renewal of the membership.
- 12 The Committee will appoint a member of the Committee to act as Deputy Chair of the Committee. The Deputy Chair will assume the role of Chair in the absence of the Chair and will preside over all matters where the Chair maintains a conflict of interest.

Role and Responsibilities of Members

- 13 Members of the Committee are expected to understand and observe the legal requirements of the University of Canberra Act 1989, University Statutes and Rules.
- 14 Members are also expected to:
 - a. act in the best interests of the University;
 - b. contribute sufficient time to review and understand the papers provided; and
 - c. apply analytical skills, objectivity and good judgment.

Administration

- 15 The Committee is supported by the University Secretariat.

Decisions

- 16 Decisions will be determined by resolution passed by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at the Committee meeting.

Meetings

- 17 The Committee meets at least four times in 2026 and two times per year each year thereafter on dates determined by the Committee, unless otherwise agreed by the Chair.

- 18 The Chair is required to call a meeting if asked to do so by the Council or the ARMC and may determine whether a meeting is required if requested by another Committee member.
- 19 Meetings may be held in person, by telephone or by videoconference or a hybrid combination as required.
- 20 A Committee Annual Plan, including meeting dates and key agenda items, will be agreed by the Committee each year. The Annual Plan will cover all responsibilities as detailed in this Charter.
- 21 Papers may only be tabled at a meeting with the approval of the Chair.
- 22 The Committee may invite staff and student representatives (or their governance bodies) to provide input on relevant agenda items, ensuring stakeholder perspectives are considered in decision-making.

Quorum and Attendance

- 23 A quorum consists of a majority of the people for the time being holding office as members of the Committee.
- 24 The Chair may approve for the whole, or any part, of a meeting of the Committee, the attendance of:
 - a. a member of the Council;
 - b. an employee or contractor of the University; or
 - c. any external persons for the purpose of providing advice or consultation to the Committee.

Induction

- 25 The University Secretary will maintain a program of induction for Committee members in accordance with the Council Governance Charter.

Remuneration

- 26 Remuneration may be payable to independent external members in accordance with the Council Remuneration Policy. The Chair and Council members appointed to the Committee are remunerated in accordance with the Council Remuneration Policy. Remuneration is not payable to staff members appointed to the Committee (refer to the Schedule within the Council Remuneration Policy).

Assessment, Review and Communication

- 27 The Committee will:
 - a. review this Charter biennially, incorporating feedback from Council, University Executive, and other governance Committees, and recommend to the Council any necessary amendments;
 - b. assess its performance biennially with respect to the Committee's purpose and functions;
 - c. communicate Committee endorsed changes to this Charter directly with Council for approval; and

- d. ensure the current version is available through publication on the University website.

Reporting

- 28 The Chair of the Committee or their delegate will report on the business of each Committee meeting at the next meeting of the ARMC.
- 29 The Committee will submit an annual report to the Council on its performance and activities, including:
 - a. a summary of the work it performed to fully discharge its responsibilities during the preceding year;
 - b. details of any outstanding business; and
 - c. details of meetings, including the number of meetings held during the relevant period and the number of meetings each member attended.
- 30 The Council and the ARMC may request additional reports on the business of the Committee as it deems necessary.
- 31 The Committee may report to the Council and ARMC any other matter it deems of sufficient importance to do so.

Version control

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