



Addressing Gender-Based Violence

Annual Report 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

RMIT University acknowledges the people of the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung language groups of the Eastern Kulin Nation on whose unceded lands we conduct the business of the University. RMIT University respectfully acknowledges their Ancestors and Elders, past and present. RMIT also acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their Ancestors of the lands and waters across Australia where we conduct our business.

Content warning

This Annual Report includes reference to sexual harm and family violence and gender-based violence. Some readers may find this distressing. If you are affected by the subject matter of this report, please seek support at the services listed below.

1800RESPECT – Call 1800 737 732 to speak with a counsellor.

Safer Community

Safer Community is RMIT’s dedicated response service for students and staff, to seek support about experiences of violence, concerning, inappropriate, unwanted or threatening behaviour. This includes threats or hate speech, discrimination, sexual harm and harassment, assault, stalking, image-based abuse/doxing/catfishing or partner and family violence. If something has happened or you are feeling uncomfortable or unsafe, either on campus or off, reach out and we can share the options and support available to you.

Phone: +61 3 9925 2396
Email: safercommunity@rmit.edu.au
Online: [Support Request Form](#)

Prevention & Respect team

RMIT’s Prevention & Respect team leads all work associated with the prevention of gender-based violence, sexual harassment, harm and assault. This work is focused across key areas of governance, awareness raising, learning and development, and our targeted innovation projects and activities.

We believe in the importance of piloting and attempting prevention innovation, so that we can continue to build on the evidence of what works and respond to emerging issues and concerns in our community.

Email: respect@rmit.edu.au

Both the Prevention and Respect and Safer Community teams sit within the Operations Portfolio’s Health, Safety & Risk function and are responsible for delivering RMIT’s [Addressing Gender-based Violence Strategic Action Plan 2023-2027](#) (PDF 19 MB).

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About this report

This report details RMIT Australia's gender-based violence prevention and response initiatives delivered in 2025, demonstrating our alignment with the *National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence* and progress against the *Strategic Action Plan 2023-2027*. RMIT Vietnam's activities are reported separately, reflecting distinct regulatory and cultural contexts. Our commitment to addressing gender-based violence remains universal across RMIT, guided by shared values and a common goal of creating safe, respectful environments for all.

Foreword

We are pleased to present the 2025 report, *Addressing Gender-based Violence at RMIT*, detailing continued progress in implementing our *Strategic Action Plan 2023-2027*.

In 2025, engagement with this work deepened across the University. Senior leaders demonstrated their commitment through participation in Our Watch leadership training, signalling that preventing gender-based violence is a priority at the highest levels. Staff enhanced capability through face-to-face training that was developed in consultation with colleagues and independently evaluated by RMIT's Centre for Organisations and Social Change.

The College of Vocational Education showed leadership, with educators and people leaders engaging in professional development focused on student safety. This culminated in RMIT partnering with Our Watch to host the National Respect and Equality TAFE Summit, contributing to sector-wide change.

Students played a central role throughout the year, shaping future programming through surveys and co-design processes, and contributing to new training for student leaders. Together, these efforts are building a more coordinated, whole-of-university approach to prevention and response.

The *National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence* commenced on 1 January 2026. RMIT welcomes this national framework, which aligns with the work we have been progressing for many years. In 2026, we will introduce new training for all staff and students, further embedding shared understanding of the systemic drivers of harm.

The responsibility to create systems and cultures free from gender-based violence is shared by all of us. We remain committed to this work.



Mish Eastman

Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Vocational Education)
and Vice-President



**Professor
Matt Duckham**

Director, Enabling Impact
Platform (Information
in Society)



Leadership and governance

Creating safe and respectful environments requires leadership at all levels. The activities in this section demonstrate progress against our Strategic Action Plan's intermediate outcomes for governance: that leaders are visibly committed to preventing gender-based violence, and that robust governance structures support effective action.



Senior leaders participating in gender-based violence prevention training delivered by Our Watch.

A national framework for change

2025 marked a significant year for the Australian higher education sector with the introduction of the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence, commencing 1 January 2026.

The Code establishes shared national expectations across seven areas: accountable leadership and governance; safe environments and systems; knowledge and capability building; safety and support; safe processes; data and evidence, and safe student accommodation. The National Code's intent is that universities take a whole-of-organisation approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence. This reflects the approach RMIT has been building through its Strategic Action Plan since 2023.

The University Council has endorsed RMIT's Prevention and Response Plan and Outcomes Framework. This endorsement at the highest governance level reinforces that addressing gender-based violence is a shared commitment across the University.

Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group on Addressing Gender-based Violence

The Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group on Addressing Gender-based Violence provides strategic oversight and guidance, with the co-chairs reporting to the Vice-Chancellor and bringing matters to the University Executive Committee (UEC), the Nominations, Remuneration and People Committee (NRPPC: Nominations, Remuneration, People and Performance Committee) and Council as required. The Advisory Group meets quarterly, providing guidance on key strategic decisions including endorsement of RMIT's approach to National Code compliance and oversight of the Prevention and Response Plan.

Senior leadership engagement

In 2025, senior leaders across RMIT continued to build their capability and demonstrate visible commitment to this work.

University Executive participated in the Our Watch Leadership Training Day, deepening their understanding of the drivers of gender-based violence and their role in fostering cultural change. Participants found the training valuable and reported improved confidence and skills, with the majority rating the session positively and experiencing a noticeable increase in capability. Members also shared their thoughts after the session with one participant stating, "It was a good opportunity to discuss this important topic", another stating the training was "evidenced-based and data driven, relevant to the university sector." Senior leaders also recorded video messages and authored articles to reinforce prevention messages and encourage participation. Building on this foundation, ongoing training for senior leaders will continue as a priority in 2026.

Strengthening our policy framework

In early 2025, RMIT undertook a comprehensive review of its policy suite to strengthen our approach and prepare for the National Code. The updated policies, effective from March 2025, adopted the term "gender-based violence" to align with contemporary language, integrated Domestic and Family Violence into the broader policy suite, and provided clearer guidance on formal investigation processes. The review also strengthened alignment with trauma-informed principles and enhanced intersectionality to better reflect the diverse experiences of our community.



Prevention initiatives and activities

The following section highlights the prevention initiatives that contribute towards RMIT achieving both our intermediate and five-year outcomes. Our aim is that students and staff are equipped with the understanding and confidence to recognise, respond to, and challenge all forms of gender inequality, sexual harm, and discrimination.

Students receiving information about Safer Community services and Prevention & Respect Team projects.

Awareness raising

In 2025, 2,934 students and 300 staff engaged through in-person and online activations, and targeted social media campaigns.

A total of 28 engagement activations were delivered across Melbourne City, City North, Brunswick and Bundoora campuses, ensuring broad reach and consistent messaging across the University. Key activations aligned with major student touchpoints, including O-Week, Club Weeks, Respect Week, and Let's Get Consensual Week, reinforcing RMIT's commitment to embedding respect, consent and safety within campus culture.

Respect at Uni Week

The sector-wide initiative provided an opportunity for students and staff to come together as a community, to deepen their understanding, and take meaningful action to prevent gender-based violence while fostering a culture of respect and safety. Launched in March 2025, the campaign combined awareness-raising stalls, film screenings, panel discussions and digital storytelling.

Respect at Uni Week provided an opportunity to promote the Sex & Consent e-learning module and direct students to support services and resources via RMIT's digital platforms. A mobile 'Snack Cart' model was introduced to encourage module completion, distributing snacks and QR codes linking to the module, while creating opportunities for more personal engagement with students.

Over 725 students visited the Snack Cart stalls and more than 600 completed surveys, with 91% reporting an increased awareness of Safer Community services. The Snack Cart model also directed students to digital resources, contributing to high engagement on campaign webpages. During Respect at Uni Week, the campaign webpage recorded 2,836 page views and 2,165 unique visitors.

Student QR code survey

A survey conducted in July and August 2025 attracted 595 responses, with 241 students—over 40% of whom identified as male—volunteering to participate in future prevention initiatives. Students reported improved understanding of gender-based violence after engaging with campaigns and training, with many moving from limited to moderate or expert understanding. Survey respondents appreciated the compulsory Sex and Consent module but called for more visible, peer-led initiatives such as support groups, digital

campaigns, short video advertisements on campus screens, survivor storytelling events and art-based advocacy projects. They encouraged tutors and lecturers to discuss gender-based violence during class orientations and emphasised the importance of equipping educators and student leaders with the resources to respond to behaviours of concern and intervene when necessary. These insights will guide future campaign design and ensure that initiatives resonate with the student body.



A student completing the Respect at Uni Week QR code survey.

Presentations to various staff cohorts

The Prevention & Respect team actively engaged with staff across the university in 2025 by joining a range of staff meetings—including Social Work and Human Services, Health and Safety Representatives, Policy Strategy Impact (PSI) Leadership Discussions, Research and Innovation Senior Managers/Team Leaders, R&I Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee, R&I Research Strategy & Services SLT, People Partners Monthly Meetings, and RMIT Activator Operations. This outreach was vital for promoting goals and expertise, identifying opportunities for synergies, and encouraging collaboration. In addition to these presentations, the team also connected with staff at the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Festival in October, where they provided information about in-person training sessions and invited staff to explore future collaborations, including special projects and bespoke training opportunities for both staff and students. These efforts significantly broadened awareness, strengthened partnerships, and advanced the team’s mission to foster a respectful and inclusive university environment.

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month in May was an important time to raise awareness, show support for women and gender-diverse people disproportionately affected by domestic and family violence, and reaffirm RMIT’s shared commitment to preventing gender-based violence.

RMIT launched a range of initiatives to engage staff and students, raise awareness, and strengthen its prevention and response strategies. Key activities included the release of the 2024 Addressing Gender-based Violence Annual Report and lighting up Building 13 (located in Russell Street) in purple in acknowledgement of National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day on Wednesday 7 May. The University shared stories through student and staff news as well as included information about the RMIT gender-based policy suite. Two online information sessions were held to promote the “Are You Safe at Home?” e-learning module to staff. The module, developed by Safe and Equal, is part of a national initiative to reduce stigma and fear associated with talking about

family violence. It provides advice to staff regarding how best to support colleagues who may be experiencing domestic and family violence.

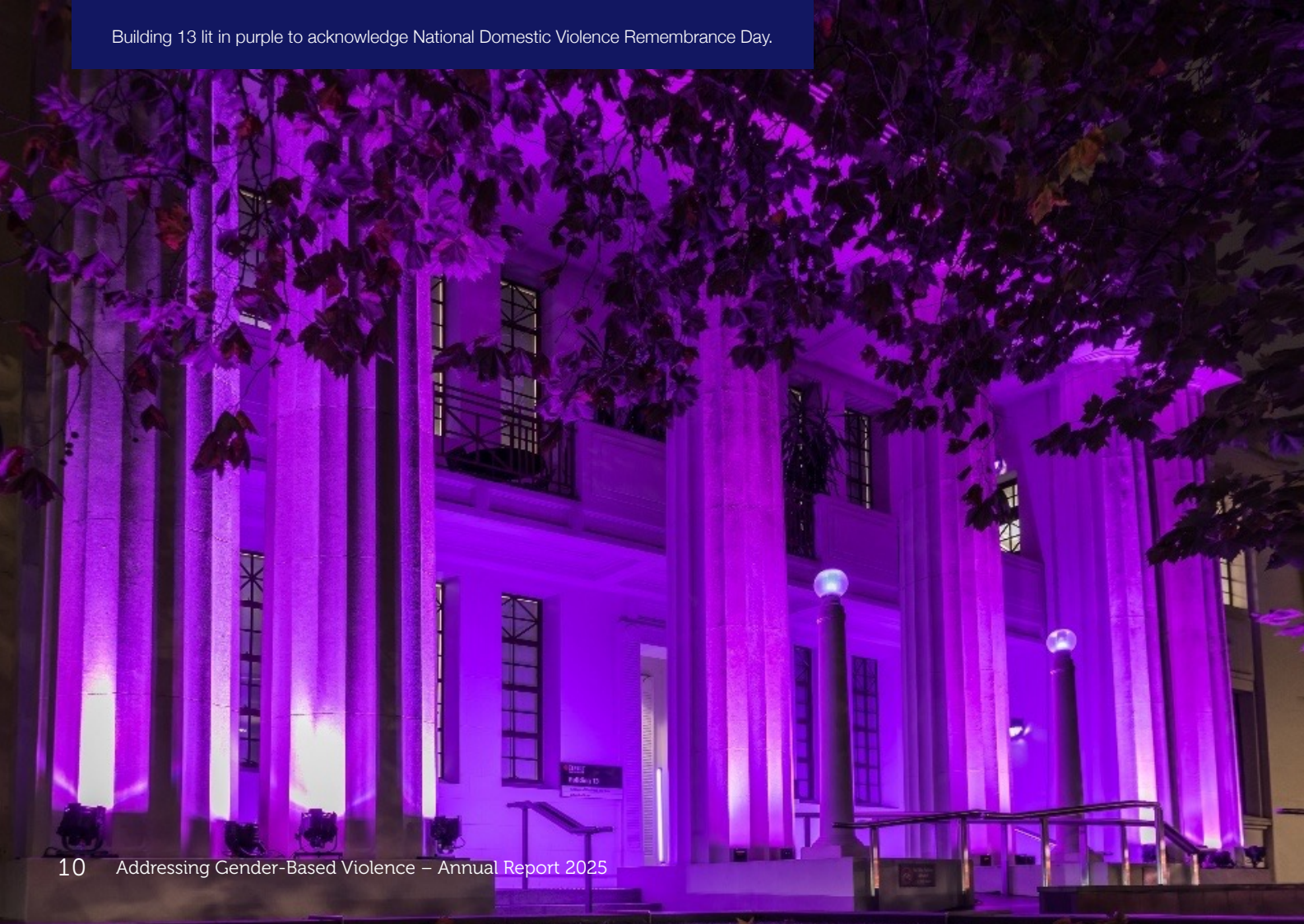
Walk Against Family Violence

RMIT staff from across the University, including Professor Matt Duckham, co-chair of the RMIT Vice-Chancellor’s Advisory Group for Addressing Gender-based Violence and RMIT’s Chief Operating Officer Fiona Notley, joined the Walk Against Family Violence as part of the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence campaign. Hosted by Respect Victoria, the walk highlighted the ongoing need to prevent violence against women and children and reinforced RMIT’s commitment to fostering a safe, respectful and inclusive community.

Conversations That Matter: Navigating Pressure and Expectations in the AFL – College of Vocational Education (CoVE) Staff Event

The Prevention & Respect team in collaboration with the CoVE Built Environment and Sustainability Cluster’s

Wellbeing Toolbox Team working group, worked together to design a staff event to engage CoVE’s predominately male cohort in conversations about dominant masculinity norms. The event, featuring guest speaker, former AFL player Ben Brown, opened a conversation about gender-based expectations. The event sought to raise awareness of how expectations such as the belief that men must be self-reliant, always in control, invulnerable, tough, stoic, competitive and suppress certain emotions are implicated in men’s violence against women, gender-diverse people, men’s violence against other men and men’s violence against themselves. The event was attended by 70 staff, who heard from Brown sharing his experiences of compromising his own values to fit into hyper-masculine settings, initiating a conversation about masculine norms and the stigma that surrounds help-seeking. The audience asked questions and received advice for creating a culture of care and support in CoVE. Safer Community and Wellbeing and Psychosocial Risk Team were involved to promote support services available for staff and students at RMIT. The working group will continue this work into 2026, with plans to organise a student event.



Building 13 lit in purple to acknowledge National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day.



RMIT colleagues at the Walk Against Family Violence.

Learning & capability development

To support whole-of-institution readiness and National Code compliance, the Prevention & Respect team adopted a targeted, data-informed approach to gender-based violence prevention and response training.

Analysis of Safer Community disclosure and inquiry data from 2023–2024 highlighted key trends, risk levels, and case complexities across both Higher Education (HE) and the College of Vocational Education (CoVE). These insights informed targeted engagement with schools and areas of study identified as having higher-risk indicators. Educators in these areas were engaged in recognition of their critical role in supporting student wellbeing and safe learning environments

In-person pilot training with staff

In May 2025, two face-to-face pilot training sessions on preventing and responding to gender-based violence were developed and delivered for the first time. One session focused on student-facing staff, while the other targeted non-student-facing (professional) staff; a total of 32 staff participated. The purpose of the pilot sessions was to consult with staff on the learning experience and to gather comprehensive, qualitative feedback to strengthen engagement and inform future delivery. The training aimed to build staff capability by increasing knowledge, confidence and competence in preventing and responding to gender-based violence.

Feedback from the pilot indicated that participants valued the clear, inclusive training content—particularly the focus on intersectionality, disclosures and real-life RMIT scenarios, along with impactful videos on structural harm. Participants committed to undertake a range of actions following the training, including promoting the training within their leadership teams, responding to disclosures more confidently and in a trauma-informed way, advocating for cultural change and increased awareness in teams and student-facing environments, incorporating gender-based violence related information in materials for under-18 international students, and being more conscious of tone, body language, and role-modelled behaviours. These insights informed the design and delivery of further sessions that were delivered between October and December 2025.

In-person training sessions for staff on Preventing and Responding to Gender-based Violence

Over 100 professional and academic staff participated in 3.5-hour face-to-face training sessions on preventing and responding to gender-based violence between October and December. The sessions were designed

and delivered by the Prevention & Respect team and covered a range of learning outcomes including building understanding of both covert and overt forms of gender-based harm and violence, the gendered and intersectional experience of violence, the role of power structures and norms in facilitating gender-based violence, active bystander strategies, the effects of trauma and applying a trauma-informed approach to responding to disclosures of gender-based violence, as well as understanding the various support and reporting channels available at RMIT. The staff training sessions, along with the student leader training sessions to be offered in early 2026, will be independently evaluated by the Centre for Organisations and Social Change (COSC). The research team will use pre-and-post and three-month follow up participant survey data to determine training effectiveness in areas of knowledge, competence, and confidence for addressing gender-based violence.

Staff reflections:

“ Small behaviors need to be addressed as part of prevention. ”

“ How deeply embedded the patriarchy still is. ”

“ Gender-based violence is a continuum, even minor acts contribute to a culture of acceptance. ”

“ I plan to use the skills learned in the training to change my behaviours to try to create a safer and gender-based violence free environment at RMIT. ”

Our Watch Training for Resident Advisors at UniLodge

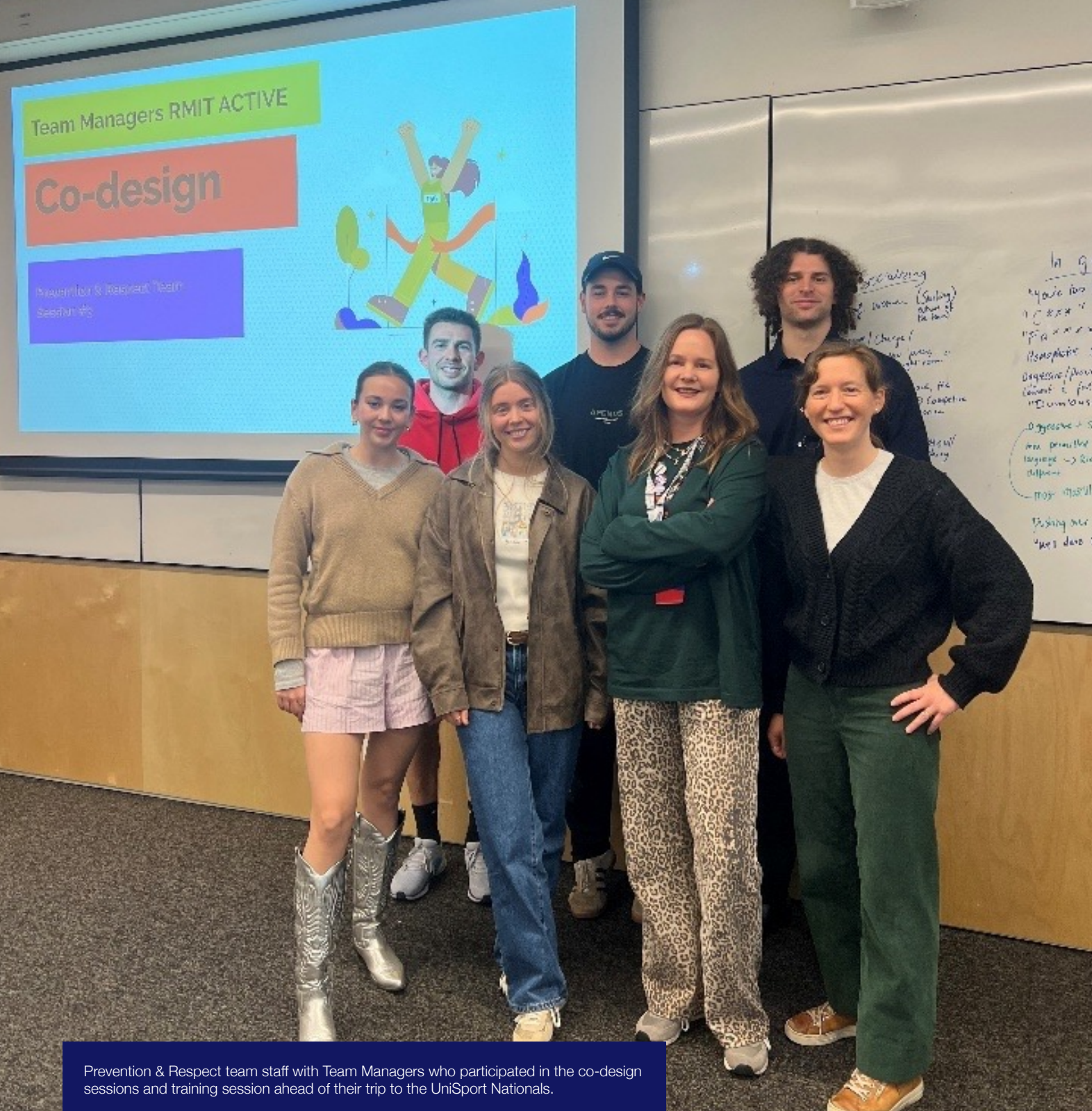
Twenty five residential advisors from various universities, including RMIT, attended training provided by Our Watch for UniLodge. In July 2025, two training sessions were delivered, covering key topics such as the definition, types, and prevalence of gender-based violence, as well as an introduction to intersectionality. The sessions explored the underlying causes of gender-based violence, including gender inequality and the principles of primary prevention. Participants learned about the four main drivers of gender-based violence and the essential actions to prevent it, relevant to residential accommodation contexts. The training also equipped student leaders with practical examples and tips on how to respond and provided guidance on becoming an effective ‘upstander’.

“ The training made me realise how much sexism there is in my family. I’m going to talk to my parents about gender-norms and the impact they have on me and society. ”

– Student quote

Student Residential Advisors from various universities who participated in training provided by Our Watch at UniLodge.





Prevention & Respect team staff with Team Managers who participated in the co-design sessions and training session ahead of their trip to the UniSport Nationals.

RMIT Active Team Managers co-design and training

The University's first face-to-face gender-based violence prevention training program for student leaders was delivered in August 2025. Three co-design workshops with five RMIT Active student leaders (Team Managers) and staff shaped the program, ensuring that case studies and messaging reflected student experiences and empowered them to know how to prevent and respond to gender-based violence both in their clubs and while attending the UniSport Nationals Sporting Competition held in September.

Seventeen student leaders, who collectively support more than 150 peers, completed the training and reported having greater knowledge, confidence, and competence in preventing and responding to gender-based violence. These outcomes are particularly encouraging, as student leaders play a pivotal role in influencing campus culture and driving positive change amongst their peers.

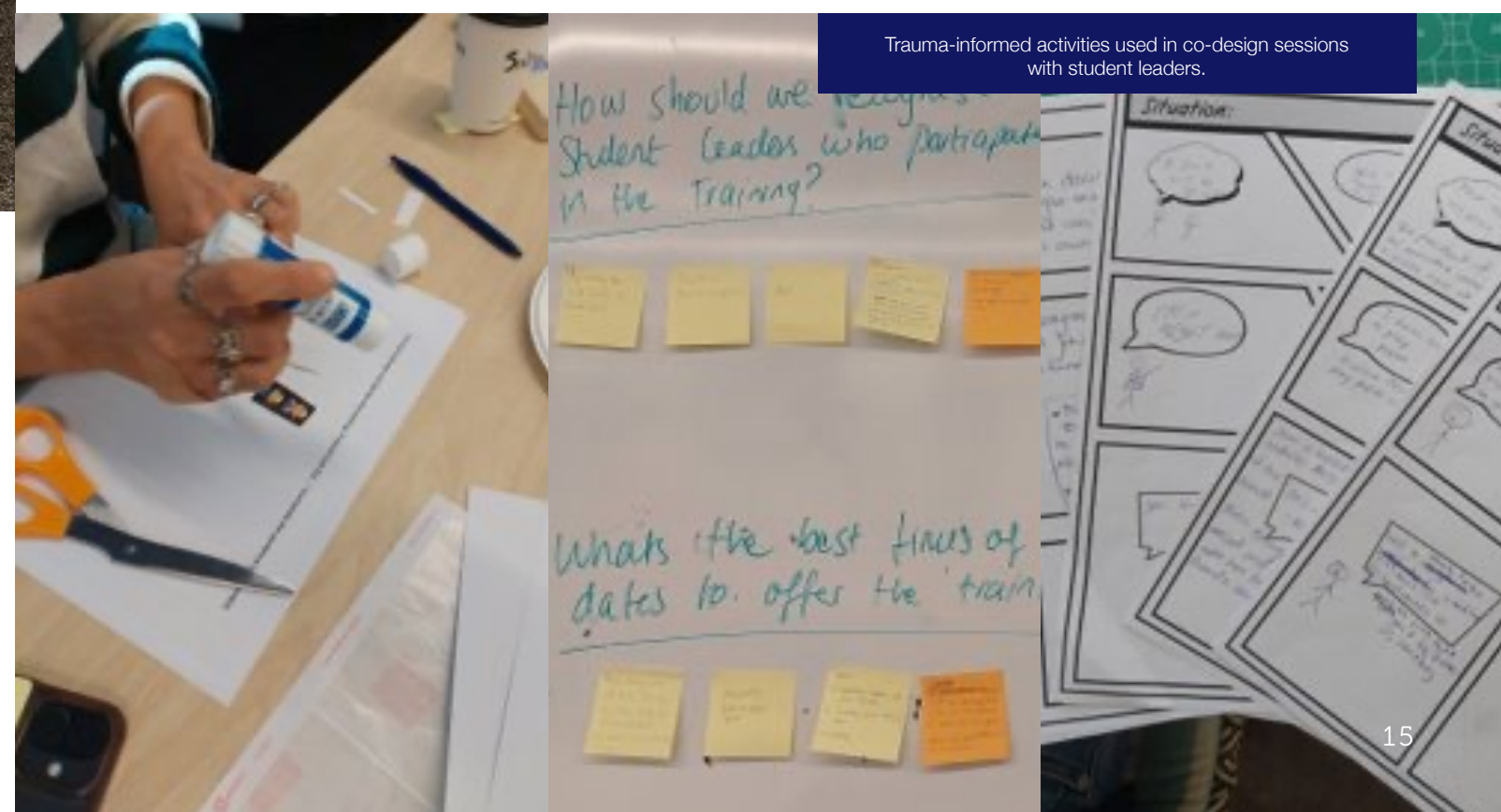


Student voices shaping safer communities.

Consultation sessions with student leaders from Student Life and academic clubs

Two consultation sessions were held with student leaders from a variety of clubs from across the student community to help shape the student leader face-to-face training that will be rolled out from February 2026. The consultation sessions focused on introducing the purpose and learning outcomes of future training, clarifying key gender-based violence concepts, causes and drivers, and exploring student leaders' roles in prevention and response. Student leaders were invited to share experiences of sexism, subtle forms of discrimination, examples of bystander actions, and situations they believe should

be addressed in case studies. Students drew on their own experiences in leadership at RMIT, reflecting on the skills they consider necessary for student leaders when it comes to preventing and responding to gender-based harm and violence in their club and leadership roles. Many of the insights shared through this process will be incorporated into the final design of future training to ensure it is relevant, meaningful, and tailored to the unique contexts and responsibilities of student leadership roles.



Trauma-informed activities used in co-design sessions with student leaders.

CoVE Built Environment and Sustainability cluster staff professional development days

Three program areas within the Built Environment & Sustainability (BE&S) cluster in CoVE took part in face-to-face professional development sessions between July and September, focusing on psychosocial wellbeing and the prevention of gender-based violence. Developed in collaboration with the Mental Wellbeing and Psychosocial Risk team, these sessions reached 55 educators. Survey results indicated improved confidence in discussing mental health, greater awareness of available support and policies, and better recognition of gender bias and gender-based violence. Participants found the training clear, informative, and valued guidance on supporting students. As a result of this training, educators are better prepared to support students’ safety and wellbeing, ensuring RMIT provides a safe and inclusive learning environment for all.

CoVE people leader training session

Fifty-two people leaders from across CoVE attended an introductory session on preventing and responding to gender-based violence. Through interactive group activities, staff enhanced their understanding of what constitutes gender-based violence and learnt trauma-informed approaches to responding to disclosures. The session had a clear impact, building both conceptual understanding and practical readiness. Participants found the experience highly valuable, deepening their awareness of Safer Community’s role and increasing their confidence in addressing wellbeing and gender-based violence concerns. The interactive format and clear, accessible information were particularly appreciated. Feedback suggested allowing more time for discussion and providing ongoing, smaller follow-up sessions. Many participants left motivated to share their knowledge, promote awareness of available support services and encourage their colleagues to participate in future training.

Senior Officer Sexual Harm Workshops

Approximately 50 Academic Integrity Senior Officers from RMIT Australia and Vietnam participated in pilot Senior Officer Sexual Harm Workshops delivered in collaboration with Safer Community and the Academic Registrar’s Group. The workshops built staff skills in identifying and responding to student conduct issues related to sexual harm.

Expanded staff and student eLearn modules

Aligned with the University’s commitment to strengthening National Code compliance, expanded e-learning modules for staff and students will soon replace the existing offerings. These new mandatory modules have a broader focus, equipping members of our community to both prevent and respond to gender-based violence across workplace and learning contexts. In 2026, the current staff module — Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace — will be retired and succeeded by a new offering that has been developed by Prevention & Respect Team in collaboration with sector experts. For students, the Sex & Consent module will be replaced by a new eLearn, developed in partnership with accredited specialists, Learning Consent, and directly informed by student input. Nine students contributed through interviews and group discussions, shaping the module’s content, language and scenarios. This collaboration ensures the module addresses contemporary topics such as consent, healthy relationships, bystander intervention, and gender-based harm in ways that are relevant, practical, and student-focused.

Victorian Tertiary Primary Prevention Network Staff Forum

RMIT hosted the 2025 Victorian Tertiary Primary Prevention Network (VTPPN) Staff Forum, bringing together 28 staff working in the primary prevention of gender-based violence from across 9 Victorian universities. The forum supported sector-wide learning, collaboration, and connection, providing structured opportunities for networking among both new and established practitioners. The day promoted continuous learning and knowledge sharing, strengthening primary prevention practice across the Victorian tertiary education sector.

National Respect and Equality TAFE Summit

Prevention & Respect Team and CoVE , in partnership with Our Watch, the national lead agency for the prevention of violence against women, hosted the National Respect & Equality TAFE Summit that was attended by approximately 50 staff from all levels from TAFEs across the country including senior leaders, diversity and inclusion staff, and TAFE staff members that have developed and implemented gender equality action

plans. Prevention & Respect team presented on the collaborative work that has occurred in partnership with male-dominated clusters in CoVE in 2025.

Summary video of Respect and Equality Summit
<https://youtu.be/4ccBmiPB2HI>

Australia & New Zealand Social Work and Welfare Education and Research (ANZSWWER) Symposium 2025

Two staff members from Prevention & Respect team presented at the Australia & New Zealand Social Work and Welfare Education and Research (ANZSWWER) Symposium 2025 at Western Sydney University. The presentation shared insights regarding the experience of designing and delivering a feminist informed co-design approach with students within a university setting. The presentation was well received given the higher education sector’s interest in co-design, which is a requirement under the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence. The national code stipulates that both staff and students are involved in informing the creation of prevention education.



Members of the Victorian Tertiary Primary Prevention Network.

Innovation – targeted projects and activities

The Adventures of Soy Boy and Friends

Respect at Uni Week saw the launch of Soy Boy Comic number one, co-created in collaboration with students, violence prevention experts, educators and industry experts. The Soy Boy comic series is an ongoing creative project that uses storytelling to celebrate online life while also challenging harmful content, narratives and digital communities that contribute to gender-based harm. The comic follows fictional characters ‘Soy Boy’, ‘T-Bone’, ‘Avo’ and ‘Pot Noodle’ as they navigate university life in an age of misinformation and online influence. To support continued co-creation and progress comic number two of the series, the project also included a student writing workshop and multiple feedback sessions delivered in partnership with CoVE Professional Writing & Screen

Writing staff. Three male-identifying students participated, contributing ideas, language and character development that directly shaped the tone and direction of the next instalment. Comic number two is scheduled for launch during Respect at Uni Week 2026.

Through an assessment embedded co-design approach, Millie Oviden, winner and illustrator of the 2024 embedded assessment and now an RMIT alum, progressed from student contributor to paid illustrator for Comic number 2, future instalments, and other creative work with the Prevention & Respect Team. This pathway demonstrates how curriculum-aligned prevention projects can support student skill development, recognise creative labour, and create meaningful post-graduation employment opportunities.

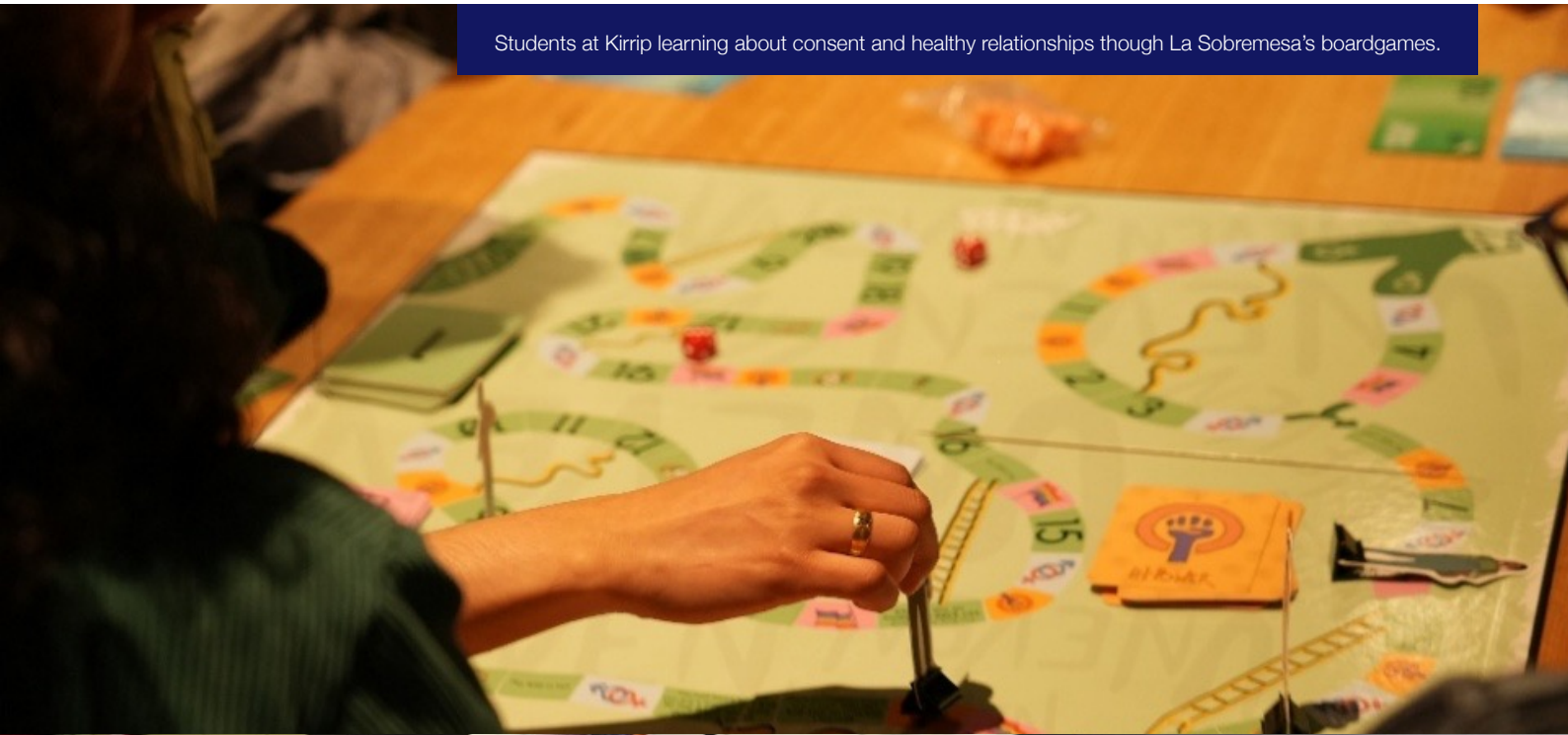
College of VE Wellbeing Toolbox Team

The College of VE (CoVE) continued to demonstrate their strong commitment to RMIT’s whole-of-university approach to preventing gender-based violence through the development of the Wellbeing Toolbox Team, an initiative which brings together staff from CoVE’s Built Environment and Sustainability Cluster. The working group, consisting of nine educators and chaired by the Prevention & Respect Team, held their inaugural meeting in August. The working group is a space to discuss student and staff wellbeing focusing on the interconnected topics of gender-based violence and mental health. The working group’s remit includes organising staff and student events as well as serving as a reference group for the Prevention & Respect Team when

developing learning and development opportunities for CoVE educators. Members of the group have committed to developing their own knowledge and skills and are united and motivated by a desire to foster safer, more respectful learning and working environment across CoVE.

La Sobremesa Board Games Afternoon in partnership with Latin Stories Australia and Kirrip

Fifteen students joined a board game afternoon hosted at Kirrip, learning about gender equality, and respectful relationships and consent through interactive boardgames designed and facilitated by Latin Stories Australia, a charitable organization supporting Latin American migrants in Australia.



Working Together with Men

The Working Together with Men (WTWM) model is based on nine years of practice-based evidence-building, on decades of activism and research to end violence, and is embedded with the lived experience of those most impacted by inequality and gendered harm. WTWM seeks to both connect and transform people and systems within their location or setting and is an intensive approach to gather men in the “moveable middle” and support allyship with action.

Between August 2024 and April 2025, a unique collaboration between RMIT’s Prevention & Respect Team and the Research & Innovation Portfolio saw an adaptation of the model commence as both a practice and research pilot for senior research leaders in the higher education setting.

Due to the success of this pilot, in August 2025, under the sponsorship of Deputy Vice- Chancellor, Distinguished Professor Calum Drummond, RMIT’s Research & Innovation Portfolio committed to a three-year innovation project. This resulted in a widening of the program to include male senior leaders with both a research and education focus, from Associate Professor and above.

A total of 33 senior male leaders were engaged in both the pilot and the first official three-year project cohort between October 2024 and December 2025.

“I’ve been in meetings since doing the program and I’ve thought, ‘Well, that doesn’t make much sense from an equity point of view’. Previously I might’ve just thought that, but now I’ve raised things, so I feel like I am progressing towards being more active.”

Ally

“Now I think allyship’s a bit more nuanced, and there’s a lot more indirect ways that I can be an ally.”

Ally

RMIT WTWM Allies (cohort 2025), WTWM project staff and guest GBV Prevention Specialists (Dr Shane Tas, Dr Innocent Mwatsiya, Dr Victor Sojo Monzon).



Response and support

Safer Community is RMIT’s dedicated response service, providing support for students and staff who have experienced violence, concerning, inappropriate, unwanted or threatening behaviour. In 2025, Safer Community progressed significant work to strengthen RMIT’s response capability and prepare for National Code compliance.



Awareness and engagement

Safer Community partnered with the Prevention & Respect Team, Student Group, and Communications on collaborative events throughout 2025, contributing to key awareness dates including O-Week, Campus Fest, Respect Week, Student Wellbeing Week, International Women’s Day, Are You Safe at Home, Walk Against Family Violence, and the 16 Days of Activism. These activities ensured that staff and students including victim-survivors, people who use violence, and bystanders know how to access support and information, and that all staff understand how to respond appropriately to disclosures.

Process review and National Code Alignment

Safer Community worked with key stakeholders to review and strengthen internal procedures for specialist investigation and case management of sexual harm and gender-based violence matters. This work has been instrumental in preparing RMIT to meet the requirements of National Code Standards 4 (Safety and Support), 5 (Safe Processes), and 6 (Data and Evidence).

As part of this preparation, Safer Community proactively updated data capture processes within Salesforce to align with National Code reporting requirements. These enhancements will support RMIT’s ongoing compliance obligations, including six-monthly reporting to the Governing Body and biennial reporting to the GBV Regulator.

2025 Data Report

A detailed report on Safer Community case data for 2025 accompanies this Annual Report as a separate attachment. This data informs our understanding of disclosure and reporting trends and supports continuous improvement of RMIT’s response systems.

Safer Community data 2025

RMIT University is committed to creating a safe, respectful and equitable community for all staff and students, one where gender-based violence is actively prevented, and where those who experience it receive a consistent, compassionate and accountable response.

Transparent reporting is central to that commitment. Publishing data on gender-based violence disclosures and responses is part of how RMIT demonstrates accountability to our community, builds trust, and drives continuous improvement in our prevention and response efforts.

This commitment is reinforced by the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence (the National Code), which commenced on 1 January 2026 and establishes a national framework for how universities understand, report on, and respond to gender-based violence.

RMIT welcomes the National Code as an important step toward sector-wide consistency and accountability, and as an opportunity to embed best practice across the higher education community.

While this report covers 2025 data and therefore predates the National Code’s formal reporting requirements, RMIT had already strengthened its data collection systems and practices in preparation for the National Code’s commencement. For data captured from 2026 onwards, our reporting will align with the national framework, enabling RMIT to contribute to a shared understanding of gender-based violence across the sector and to measure progress with greater rigour over time.

We recognise that data alone does not create change. It is what we do with it that matters; using evidence to inform prevention initiatives, identify emerging risks, and ensure our response systems are effective, trauma-informed and fair. This report is part of that ongoing effort.



Gender-based violence data

In 2025, Safer Community received 252 sexual harm and family violence disclosures, relating to 247 respondents, a 37% increase from 185 in 2024. Of these 56% were affiliated to RMIT with 49 progressing to formal reports or investigations.

Australian data tells us that sexual assault and sexual harassment remain significantly under-disclosed and underreported. RMIT is committed to evidence-based, best practice prevention and response that builds confidence in our reporting pathways.

Both staff and student disclosures increased from 2024 levels. While we cannot determine whether this reflects increased prevalence or greater willingness to report, we believe sustained awareness efforts may have contributed to growing confidence in our reporting pathways. Continued improvements to data collection, including further development of the Salesforce case management system and clearer categorisation of disclosure types, have also supported more complete data capture than in previous years. In 2025, Safer Community delivered 40 training sessions to over 1,000 attendees, nearly four times the number of sessions delivered in 2024. Safer Community provided direct support to 199 students, 41 staff members, and 4 past students, with a further 14 disclosures made anonymously.

It is also worth noting two factors that shape how RMIT’s figures should be understood. With a large, open CBD campus embedded in the heart of Melbourne, RMIT staff and students move through a busy urban environment as part of their everyday experience, and our data reflects that reality.

Additionally, Safer Community has long operated on the principle that support should be available to staff and students regardless of where harm occurs. This means disclosures of gender-based violence unconnected to RMIT, such as family violence or incidents in personal relationships, have been captured in our data for some time, predating the National Code’s requirement that universities respond to GBV wherever it occurs.

Together, these factors mean our figures represent a broad and inclusive picture of the experiences of our community, and our commitment to supporting staff and students in relation to gender-based violence matters, regardless of the context.

RMIT supports victim-survivors to make informed decisions about their options following an incident. Support options include counselling, financial grants, and wellbeing resources, regardless of where an incident occurred. For students, this also includes academic adjustments, such as extensions, deferred assessments, or changes to timetabling, to ensure that an incident does not affect their ability to continue and succeed in their studies. Victim-survivors can also choose to make a formal report, which may initiate a trauma-informed investigation. Formal reports can result in a range of outcomes including behavioural warnings, suspension or expulsion for students, and formal warnings, suspension or termination for staff.

Staff and student disclosures

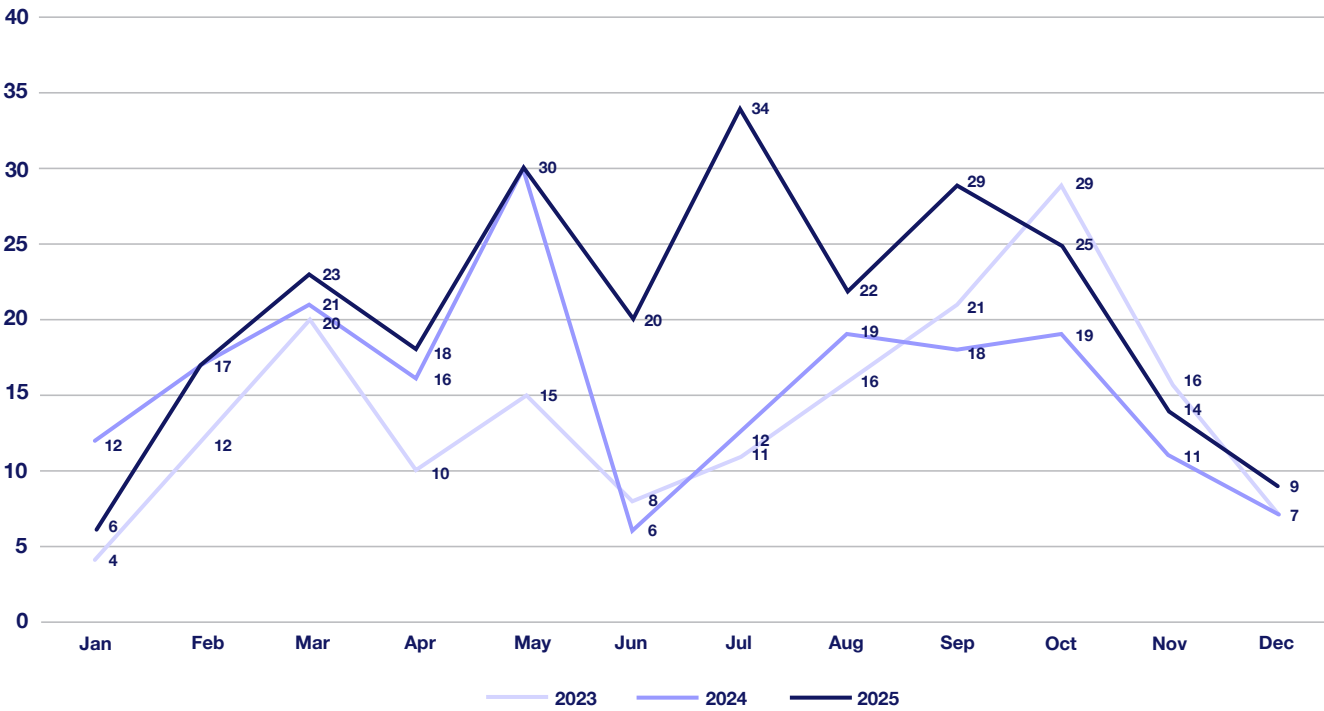
RMIT will always support victim-survivors regardless of where harm occurred. This includes incidents both within and outside an RMIT context.

A matter is considered university-affiliated and formal action can be initiated when it involves two or more members of the RMIT community, or the person using violence is a member of the RMIT community (even if the others involved are not RMIT community members); a single community member on RMIT premises or at an RMIT-organised activity; or a setting facilitated by RMIT (including virtual environments) even where RMIT community members are not directly involved. A matter is considered not university-affiliated when it occurs solely within the personal or private life of a community member with no connection to RMIT premises, activities, or facilitation.

Of the 252 GBV disclosures received in 2025, students represented the largest group of impacted individuals at 78% (198 disclosures), with 85% of student disclosures involving female impacted persons. In total, 199 students received support from Safer Community during 2025, reflecting that some students supported during the year had made disclosures in a prior period. Staff accounted for 41 disclosures (16%), and alumni accounted for 4 disclosures (1.5%).

Of all sexual harm disclosures, approximately 50% were RMIT-affiliated, reflecting Safer Community’s broader role as a trusted support service for members of our community who experience gender-based violence beyond the immediate university context.

Gender-based violence casework



Staff disclosures

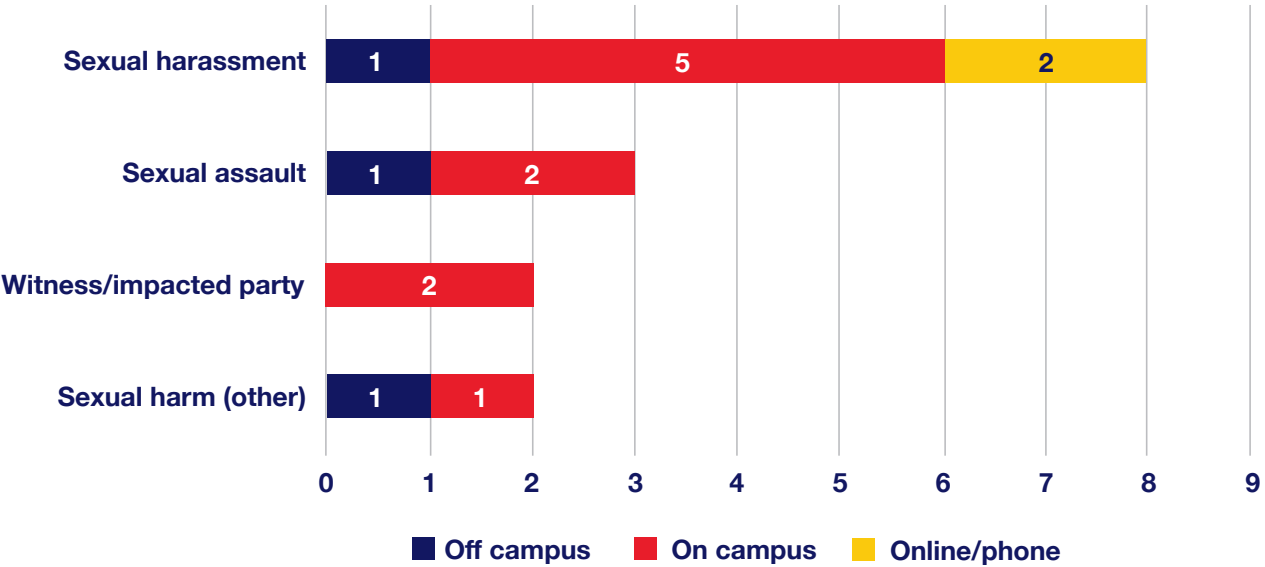
In 2025, Safer Community received 41 disclosures where a staff member was the impacted person.

Of the 15 staff members identified as respondents, the majority were in continuing roles (11 of 15). Among RMIT-affiliated respondents, 77% were male. Sexual harassment was the most frequently reported category in matters involving staff respondents (8 matters), occurring across on-campus, off-campus, and online environments. Sexual harm (other) accounted for 5 matters, and sexual assault for 3 matters. The presence of online incidents

alongside on-campus reports highlights the importance of prevention strategies that span both physical and digital workplace settings.

Safer Community also received 109 family violence disclosures across staff and students in 2025. Of these, 10 (9%) involved an RMIT-affiliated person as the respondent. The remaining 91% were staff or students seeking support for family violence unrelated to their employment or study at RMIT.

Staff respondents by category and location





Formal reports and any disciplinary or investigation actions

Student disclosures

In 2025, Safer Community received 198 disclosures where a student was the impacted person, representing a significant increase on 2024 levels.

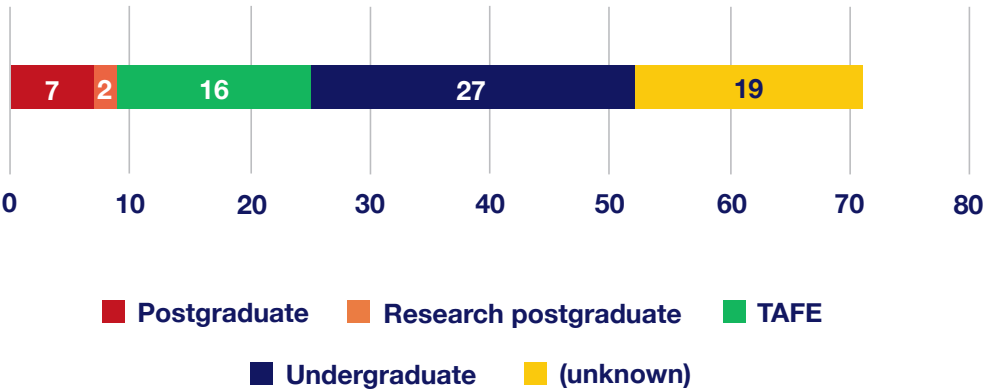
Of the 81 RMIT-affiliated sexual harm incidents reported in 2025:

- On campus was the most common location, accounting for 51% of all affiliated incidents (42 reports). Of these, sexual harassment was the most frequently reported category (29 reports, 69%), followed by sexual harm (other) (5), sexual assault (4), historical sexual assault (2), stalking (1), and witness reports (1).

- Off campus incidents accounted for 23% (19 reports).
- Placement settings accounted for 10% (8 reports).
- Smaller numbers were reported in relation to online/ phone (4), club events (3), RMIT Global (2), student accommodation (1), and online learning environments (1).

Across all sexual harm matters, sexual harassment accounted for 51% and sexual assault for 40%, with the remaining 9% comprising sexual harm (other), stalking, and witnessing.

GBV student disclosures by level of study



Disciplinary report process

RMIT supports victim-survivors to make informed decisions about their options following an incident. The University offers a range of support options regardless of where an incident occurred, including wellbeing support, counselling, and financial grants, as well as the option to formally report. While not all victim-survivors choose to formally report, those that do can initiate a trauma-informed investigation.

In 2025, 73 disclosures were referred to the GBV Senior Investigator, with 49 progressing to formal investigation, of which 46 were completed, compared with 33 completed in 2024.

Staff conduct data

In 2025, 17 formal reports were received where a staff member was the respondent. Of these, 15 were completed and 2 remained under investigation at year end. Of the completed investigations, 4 were substantiated and resulted in disciplinary action, and 2 were not substantiated. The remaining completed matters were resolved through other pathways, including informal management or no further action required.

Student conduct data

In 2025, 32 formal reports were received where a student was the respondent. Of these, 31 were completed and 1 remained under investigation at year end. Impacted persons included 25 students, 3 staff members, and 5 third parties.

Of the completed investigations, 2 were not substantiated. The remaining matters were resolved through a range of pathways, including 8 matters referred to the Student Conduct Board, resulting in 5 expulsions, 1 unenrolment, and 2 suspensions. A further 7 formal warnings were issued. 9 matters were informally managed, 6 could not be progressed due to the impacted party withdrawing. 1 matter had a pending outcome at year end.

What's changing from 2026

The National Code, which commenced on 1 January 2026, sets clear expectations for how universities must manage formal reports of gender-based violence, giving staff and students greater assurance that reports will be handled promptly, fairly, and with appropriate support throughout.

This includes the right to be kept informed at every stage of the process, access to a support person, and the assurance that formal reports will be finalised within clear timeframes. While these requirements did not apply to the 2025 reporting period, RMIT has made significant changes to its processes in preparation, including strengthened investigation timeframes, clearer reporting pathways, and enhanced support for everyone involved.

The 2025 data reflects a year of active improvement, with those changes already evident in our outcomes. From 2026, these changes are embedded as a formal requirement, and our next annual report will reflect what it looks like when those standards are fully in place.