

# Guidelines for responding to disclosures of sexual assault

A resource for staff and students in responding to a person who discloses they have been sexually assaulted.

It is important to remain compassionate, respectful, and supportive.

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## **Attend to Safety**

Determine whether there are any immediate risks to the person's wellbeing and safety. For immediate assistance, call 999 for police or 995 for ambulance

For on-campus security call 6709 3892

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**Listen and be supportive** - It can be very hard for someone to disclose sexual assault. Give the person your full attention. Speak calmly, let them tell you at their own pace, without interrupting or asking direct questions about the experience. Silences are okay. Letting someone take charge of what they disclose enables them to reclaim some control.

**Believe them** - Do not ask 'why' questions – these questions carry blame and judgement. Validate the person's experience by acknowledging their distress. Saying 'I am sorry for what has happened' is heard as 'I believe you'; saying 'What happened to you is never okay' is heard as 'This is not your fault', saying 'I will do what I can to find help' is heard as 'You are not alone'

**Maintain confidentiality** - Treat what is shared with you confidentially, do not share with others without permission.

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## **Refer to support - Connect in with the specialist Sexual Assault Services - free and confidential**

The specialist Sexual Assault Services will meet the person in a safe and private place, and offer ways to help manage the physical and emotional effects of sexual assault. They can explain and assist with legal and medical options - including any emergency health care or forensic examinations, and any decisions about reporting to Police. They can assist with access to the support JCU can provide to continue with studies or work. They will ensure the person's decisions are communicated and respected.

### Specialist Service:

Sexual Assault Care Centre 6779 0282 (Monday to Friday 10am-6pm)

<https://sacc.aware.org.sg>

### Helplines:

AWARE Women's Helpline 1800 777 5555 (Monday to Friday 10am - 6pm)

National Anti-Violence Hotline 1800 777 0000 (24/7 in English/Mandarin/Malay/Tamil)

## **Refer to support – Assistance to continue work or study**

JCU has dedicated Sexual Misconduct Officers who provide a single point of contact. They can assist with working out what support a person needs to continue with studying or working. Support can include safety plans, emergency housing, or changes to class scheduling, assessment, or work reporting lines. Support can be provided without identifying the other person/people involved.

Sexual Misconduct Officers are Vanessa Cannon, Chief of Staff 61-7 47814078 or mob 61-419 245 992 | Nola Kuilboer, Executive Officer 61-7 4781 4929 or mob 0415 163 290.

Or e: [smo@jcu.edu.au](mailto:smo@jcu.edu.au)

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## **Reporting Options**

To let JCU know about sexual misconduct, contact the Sexual Misconduct Officers or use the online sexual misconduct form at [www.jcu.edu.au/respect/singapore](http://www.jcu.edu.au/respect/singapore)

It is possible to make an anonymous report to JCU, and it is possible to do so without identifying any other person/people involved.

To report a sexual assault to Police - <https://www.police.gov.sg/Advisories/Crime/Sexual-Crimeassault/report>

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## **Take Care of Yourself**

It can be difficult to support someone who has disclosed to you. Confidential support is available to you from a Sexual Misconduct Officer, or the Helplines/Services listed above.