

UTAS WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE

ACTION AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON CAMPUS

The University of Tasmania Women's Collective welcome this opportunity to put forward a submission for the proposed prohibition of the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and the creation and implementation of a civil penalty regime to deter and penalise persons and content hosts that engage in the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.

The University of Tasmania (UTas) Women's Collective, founded in 2014, strives to provide a safe and supportive environment for women and non-binary members of the student body at the University of Tasmania. The UTas Women's Collective also function as a social networking group providing and facilitating a safe space within which gender related issues can be raised, discussed and acted upon.

In 2015, a survey conducted by the NUS Women's Department found that 72.75 percent of respondents reported lived experience of sexual harassment or unwelcome sexual behaviour during their enrollment in tertiary institutions. Common variants of this harassment include but is not exclusive to:

- Transphobic and Queer harassment
- Staring/leering
- Making suggestive jokes/comments - this includes asking intrusive questions about the person's private life (social defamation and coercion)
- Imposing unnecessary familiarity

The individual impact from exposure to said predatory behaviour shows through diminished access to education, increases in poor holistic wellbeing as well as a normalised attitude that not only permits such actions but causes the victim to believe they are a) to blame and, b) expected to either dismiss or tolerate it in silence.

Based on this data, we recommend the following:

- The complaints filed need to be processed appropriately, not just float in the system (all complaints have an assurance of an outcome) e.g. address the inefficiency of current grievance procedures
- Compulsory consent and sex education early on and constantly throughout the schooling system starting early and ranging across primary to tertiary education providers.

- Victims of “revenge porn”/ non-consensual image sharing should not be expected to immediately provide evidence for their claim to be believed.
- Victims should not have to provide evidence of distress caused or impact on their lives.
- Non-consensual sharing of intimate images must also include unsolicited intimate images.
- The act of sharing an image should itself be considered an offence, intention notwithstanding.

In closing, we recommend altering phrasing for policy, specifically altering ‘revenge porn’ to ‘the non consensual sharing of images’, as the original term reflects blame onto the victim/s. The definition should also be expanded to include both sharing and receiving images in the definition.

Thanks for the opportunity to contribute to this pressing discussion. We are happy to provide additional information and welcome any requests you may have. Contact us through the following:

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Kind regards,

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