

WORONI

Australian National University Student Media

ETHICAL REPORTING ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY

1. Purpose

1. This policy has been created to ensure that ANU Student Media publications that concern sexual violence are constructed and published in an ethical way, which prioritises the wellbeing of survivors.
2. In adopting these guidelines, ANUSM acknowledges the courage of survivors of sexual assault and harassment in deciding to share their stories with media and the risk of institutional betrayal associated with this experience. We also note the vulnerability for re-traumatisation throughout this process, and seek to prevent this.
3. Further, ANUSM acknowledges the challenges that reporting on or editing content about sexual violence pose for Editors and sub-editors, and in particular the risk of vicarious trauma.

2. Definitions

1. Sexual violence: Definitions vary, based on legal, experiential and behavioural understandings. Behaviours that may broadly be encompassed by sexual violence include, but are not limited to, sexual harassment, rape, sexualised bullying, unwanted kissing or sexual contact, sexual pressure or coercion.
2. Survivor: An individual who has identified themselves as having experienced sexual violence, and/or who self-identifies with the term survivor.
3. Alleged Perpetrator: An individual who has been identified as having committed sexual violence who has not been found guilty by a legal proceeding or university-based disciplinary process.
4. Perpetrator: An individual who has been identified as having committed sexual violence who has been found guilty by a legal proceeding or university-based disciplinary process.

3. Other Policy Documents

This policy document should be read in conjunction with ANUSM's:

- a. Approvals Procedure
- b. Conflict of Interest Policy
- c. Content Warning Policy
- d. Social Media and Communications Policy
- e. Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policy.

4. Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence

1. Upon receiving a disclosure of a possible sexual violence, Editors or sub-editors must respond with appropriate support services.
2. Sub-editors are strongly encouraged to escalate a disclosure of sexual violence to their Editor.
3. At any time, a sub-editor may choose to remove themselves from working on an article pertaining to sexual violence, by letting their Editor and any survivors they are working with know.
4. At any time, an Editor may choose to remove themselves from working on an article pertaining to sexual violence, by letting the Editor-in-Chief (or in their absence, the Deputy Editor-in-Chief) and any survivors they are working with know.
5. The details of a disclosure or the identity of the survivor should never be shared with any other member of the Woroni team, or with anyone outside of Woroni, without the explicit permission of the survivor.
 - a. This means that if a sub-editor or Editor needs to remove themselves from a piece, they should let the survivor know and either:
 - i. In the case of a sub-editor removing themselves from a piece: let the survivor know and give them appropriate contact details for contacting the sub-editor's Editor or the Editor-in-Chief, as per the sub-editor's preference; or
 - ii. In the case of an Editor removing themselves from a piece: let the survivor know and give them appropriate contact details for contacting the Editor in Chief; and
 - iii. Ask the survivor's permission to forward their correspondence to the specified Editor (being the Editor responsible for the sub-editor) or the Editor-in-Chief, and if it is granted, do so.
6. Upon commencing their roles, Editors and sub-editors should be provided with the list of resources for survivors of sexual violence in Appendix A, and the sample response to a disclosure of sexual violence included in Appendix B.

5. Application

1. Any inquiries not covered by this section must be brought to the Board and submitted to a vote.
2. Content Articles
 - a. Survivors must be given the option of whether their article is shared in print, online and/or on social media.
 - b. Survivors must be told the time of publication online, in print and on social media with at least 24 hours of notice.
 - i. If this time is deemed unsuitable, the survivor may suggest an alternate time and this must be communicated.
 - ii. Survivors must be provided with the phone number and email address of the Editor-in-Chief, for the purposes of cancelling or delaying publication if they wish to do so.

- c. Stories pertaining to sexual violence should only be uploaded to the website and shared on social media by Editors.
- d. Survivors must be given the option of remaining anonymous, according to the requirements set out in section 6 below.

3. News Reporting

- a. News sub-editors should never approach someone who they know or suspect to be a survivor and ask them about their experiences without them having specifically reached out to Woroni.
 - i. In a case where a survivor does reach out to Woroni, they must be provided with appropriate support services, including different platforms (e.g. phonedlines, online resources and in-person counselling) before any reporting commences.
 - ii. This includes where a story has already been reported on by other news outlets, whether this be on campus or in the wider Canberra, national or international media.
- b. Survivors should be offered the chance to read the article in which their experience is disclosed prior to its publication. This may only occur after the survivor has provided their testimony.
- c. Survivors must be told the time of publication online, in print and through social media with at least 24 hours of notice.
 - i. If this time is deemed unsuitable, the survivor may suggest an alternate time and this must be communicated.
 - ii. Survivors must be provided with the phone number and email address of the Editor-in-Chief, for the purposes of canceling or delaying publication if they wish to do so.
- d. Stories pertaining to sexual violence should only be uploaded to the website and shared on social media by Editors.

6. Anonymity

- 1. In the first contact with a survivor, they should be offered the option of de-identification or anonymity.
- 2. Should the survivor decide to publish anonymously, the original recipient of the disclosure must not divulge their identity or any details that are not to be published to any other Editor, Sub-Editor, or other person, other than the Editor-in-Chief.
 - a. The Editor-in-Chief must not divulge their identity or any details that are not to be published to any other Editor, Sub-Editor, or other person, other than the Deputy Editor-in-Chief.
- 3. Anonymous pieces must be identified as such during the approvals process, so that Editors have an opportunity to identify and remove potentially identifying details.

7. Defamation

1. If the survivor or an Editor deem the piece to present a defamation risk, ANUSM may seek legal advice. The survivor must be informed of this prior to advice being sought.
 - a. This may include sharing a draft of the article to be published with a lawyer.
2. This process must remain confidential between the executive and the Editor or sub-editor handling the article; however, the legal advice provided must be shared amongst the Board. The advice should be anonymized where necessary to protect the survivor's identity.

8. Use of Terminology

1. Survivors should only be referred to by their preferred term. If the survivor has not identified a preferred term, survivor should be used.
2. Perpetrators should only be referred to as "alleged perpetrator" or "alleged offender" unless their guilt has been determined by legal process or university disciplinary process, in which case they may be referred to as "perpetrator" or "offender".
3. Cases of sexual violence with multiple perpetrators should be referred to as "multiple perpetrator rape/sexual assault."
 - a. The terms "gang rape" or "pack rape" should never be used as a descriptor of an instance of sexual assault, unless this is the survivor's preferred terminology.
4. The act of sexual assault should not be referred to as "sex" or in sexualised terms except where this is the explicit preference of the survivor.
 - a. Appropriate legal terminology such as "sexual assault" or "sexual violence" should always be used, unless alternative terminology is preferred by the survivor.
 - b. The non-consensual and coercive nature of sexual assault should be emphasised and explicitly clear in the language used.

9. Policy Details

This policy was adopted by ANU Student Media on 14/08/2018

The policy was last updated on 18/05/23

Appendix A: Resources for Survivors of Sexual Assault

Canberra Rape Crisis Centre, Crisis Line
(02) 6247 2525

This is an over the phone counselling service. It is open from 7am to 11pm, seven days a week. You can also use this number for counselling related inquiries or to book face-to-face appointments with Canberra Rape Crisis Centre, including on ANU Campus. All services are free of charge. You do not need a medicare card to access this service. They will not tell the police or the university that they have spoken with you. Canberra Rape Crisis Centre can also provide advocacy support if you choose to formally report an incident to the police or the university.

ANU Student Safety and Wellbeing
(02) 6125 2211

Student.wellbeing@anu.edu.au

The Student Safety and Wellbeing team provides coordinated support for victim-survivors, such as safety planning, academic flexibility and information on specialist support services. They offer assistance with reporting options both within the ANU and police services and can link victim-survivors with specialist services including referrals to health services and counselling. They can provide advice and support for first responders and bystanders. Case Managers have backgrounds in health, social work, counselling and human services. They work from person-centred and trauma-informed practice frameworks

ANU Counselling
(02) 6125 2442

This is the phone number to book an appointment with ANU Counselling. You can book a standard appointment (50 mins) anytime. To book an on the day appointment for urgent help (25 mins) call at 9am or go into the Counselling Centre just before 9am, as these appointments are first in first served. You can receive 6 free sessions per semester. You do not need a medicare card to access this service, but you must be an ANU student. They will not tell the police or the university that they have spoken with you.

1800 RESPECT
1800 737 732

This is over the phone counselling and it is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can also refer you to local services. It is free of charge. 1800 RESPECT has a triage system, so the first person you speak to is not a counsellor. We recommend that you request to be put through to a counsellor straight away.

Meridian
(02) 6257 2855

contact@meridianact.org.au

Meridian is a community-controlled, peer-led organisation that provides health and social supports to people living with and impacted by HIV, people of diverse sexual identities, people of diverse gender identities, people with lived experience of disability (including psychosocial disability) and people from diverse cultural backgrounds (including those who have sought asylum). Meridian is not a crisis service. Meridian is an appointment-based services which responds to enquiries from 9:00am to 4:00pm, Monday to Friday.

Appendix B: Receiving Disclosures

It is not your responsibility to provide pastoral care to survivors who disclose. It is better for all people involved, both you and them, if they seek professional care.

Here is an example of a response you may be able to give:

"Hi, thank you so much for telling me – it is a really brave thing to do. I am so sorry that it happened to you. I just want you to know that I believe you and it is not your fault. If you need some support, I recommend you give Canberra Rape Crisis Centre a call. Their number is (02) 6247 2525. They are a totally confidential counselling service- and you can chat on the phone, or make a face to face appointment

