UCD REPORT AND SUPPORT

Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Harassment

Anonymous Reporting: 2020

Overview

I am pleased to present the first Annual Report of UCD's Report and Support tool for 2020. This is a facility that supports staff and students to make anonymous reports of incidents of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment by students, employees and others and also to receive information about how they may best be supported by the University with respect to the issues they have experienced.

The higher education sector in Ireland has recognised endemic problems of sexual harassment and sexual violence affecting students and employees. There has been extensive discussion in the University and beyond amplifying the need to review and reform both how the University positively promotes a culture of dignity and respect and how it structures supports for those coming forward with complaints. This emphasises the importance of the current review of the Dignity and Respect policies and procedures and the availability of data, anonymous or otherwise, in relation to issues of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment occurring in UCD.

UCD was one of the founding members of the National Women's Council of Ireland-led campaign Ending Sexual Harassment and Violence in Third Level Education (ESHTE) in 2017 which led towards the adoption of a government-led National Consent Framework in 2019. Within the sectoral measures, UCD has led on the implementation and launch of this Report and Support Tool in February 2020, to gain a better understanding of the character, scale and location of breaches of Dignity and Respect policies and to channel those affected towards the supports available. In February 2021, UCD submitted the Consent Framework Action Plan to the HEA in which the Report and Support Tool featured strongly and this Action Plan will be supplemented following the approval of the new draft Dignity and Respect policies addressing Bullying and Harassment and Sexual Misconduct.

I would like to thank Professor Jason Last, Dean of Students, for his leadership both with the Report and Support Tool and UCD's Consent Framework Action Plan, and also the whole UCD team working to develop and advance these policies and actions as a major priority for the University. The proposed set of revisions to the University's Dignity and Respect Policy/Procedure to address ongoing challenges experienced by employees and students together with the wider cultural actions informed by the data in the Report and Support tool will assist in the creation of a respectful and inclusive environment as part of the measures to demonstrate and to ensure that bullying, harassment and sexual harassment/misconduct are not tolerated in our University.

Professor Colin Scott

Vice-President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Anonymous Reporting: The First Year

Introduction

The following report contains data relating to the anonymous reporting of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment through the UCD Report and Support tool. A report was submitted to UMT in June 2020 detailing the data from the first quarter of the year and the themes arising, which was subsequently published online to enhance transparency around the process. This longer report contains almost a full year's worth of data from 20 January 2020 when the tool became available to 31 December 2020. Whilst COVID-19 may have impacted the numbers reporting due to remote studying and working for many there has been steady reporting throughout the year. There may not yet be sufficient data to identify strong trends, it nevertheless provides important information for the University around the culture of dignity and respect in UCD and the fact that the numbers of anonymous reports far outweigh formal dignity and respect complaints. It is anticipated that the numbers reporting will increase in 2021 for a variety of reasons including a heightened awareness around dignity and respect following the completion of the Dignity and Respect review, a promotional campaign around this tool, increased trust in the tool through transparency as a result of publishing of the data and actions being taken based on the themes arising.

It is anticipated that annual reports, timed for the end of each academic year, will complement other dignity and respect reports that may be submitted once the dignity and respect review is complete.

Background

The Report and Support tool is a facility available to people who wish to anonymously report incidents of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment. In 2019 it was agreed by UMT SEG that, under the oversight of UCD ESHTE (Ending Sexual Violence in Third Level Education), UCD should establish an anonymous reporting system with the following objectives:

- To enable those experiencing or witnessing incidents of bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment to make the University aware of their experiences without the need for disclosing personal details;
- To enable the University to raise awareness of the appropriate support services and the formal complaint procedure;
- To monitor and report on the number and categories of incidents bullying, harassment and sexual harassment to help the University better understand its culture in relation to dignity and respect issues;
- To identify any trends or significant issues that the University can respond to through targeted actions or initiatives.
- To raise awareness of the dignity and respect issues faced by members of the University community

This tool was made available on 20 January 2020 with a formal launch held on 25 February 2020. Whilst a formal Dignity and Respect complaint process has been in place for many years, it is acknowledged that for a variety of reasons some people feel unable, or choose not to, make formal complaints or engage with the informal means of resolving issues of this nature. It was however deemed essential that the data is captured in order to better understand the culture around bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment in UCD and to take steps to address the themes arising.

Developments since the last Report

To ensure anonymity the tool contains a series of questions and dropdown response statements. No free text options are available. To encourage those engaging with the system to complete of all questions in the survey responses include a "prefer not to say" option. Questions in the tool have since been refined further based on feedback received from College Principals/Vice-Presidents and UCD ESHTE which provided greater clarity and enhanced the quality of the data being obtained. Meetings have also taken place with College Vice Principals for EDI, Heads of Unit and HR Partners, where reports have been made, to identify an appropriate group to review the data at College/Unit level on a quarterly basis, or more frequently if required. The intention is that a report would then be made to the College Executive and relevant group in Vice-President areas where themes arising are highlighted and recommendations around proposed actions to be taken to address the themes. To assist with this process, a College/Unit dashboard has been developed with a summary of the key data on a quarterly and annual basis as well as the detail behind this data, all of which is anonymous and in line with GDPR legislation. It is essential that the University is proactive based on the data arising as a result of this tool.

Year 1 Reports

The charts and tables in this report provide an overview of the number and nature of anonymous reports made through UCD Report and Support during the period 20 January 2020 to 31 December 2020.

A total of **123** anonymous reports were received during the first year of operation. The graph below shows the number of reports made by month. It is likely that the global pandemic and the move to online learning has impacted overall numbers, nevertheless, the tool has been used continuously by both students and employees throughout 2020. The periods in which most reports were received were February, which coincided with the formal launch of the tool, and during the start of the new academic session, when communications relating to the tool were issued and student initiatives, such as the *Active Bystander Programme: UCD Says No to Sexual Misconduct*, were delivered as part of orientation 2020.
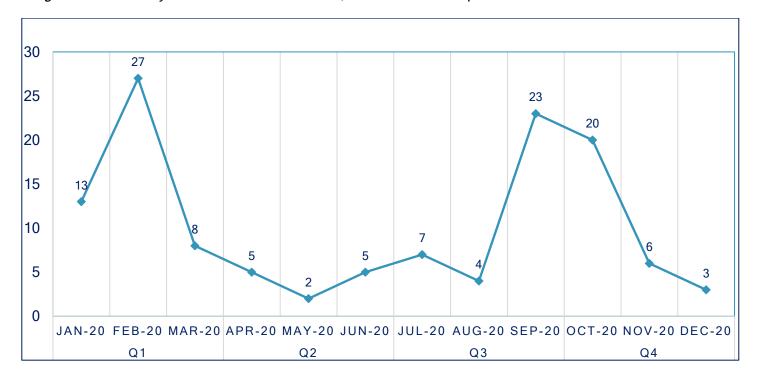

Figure 1: Reports made by month.

1. Who reported?

The group reporting most were students (49%), while employees accounted for 36% of the reports received. 8% indicated their connection with the University by stating 'other'[1] and 7% of those reporting preferred not to state their connection with the University.
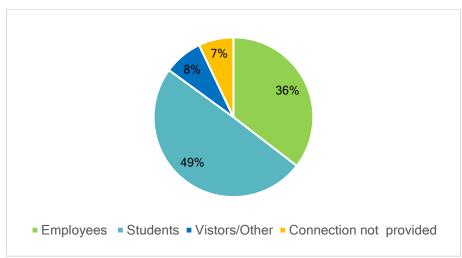

Figure 2: Connection with the University of those reporting.

Table 1 provides the gender breakdown of those who reported incidents they had experienced. Of this group, 69% were female; 18% were male; 4% were gender non-binary and almost 10% preferred not to state their gender. UCD Report and Support facilitates reporting by bystanders, those who have witnessed incidents, or by those who wish to report on behalf of someone else. Table 1 provides the number of reports submitted by those who had experienced bullying, harassment or sexual harassment and Table 2 presents the number of bystander reports.

Myself	Number of reports	Female	Male	GNB[2]	PNS[3]
Employees	36	20	7	0	9
Students	54	43	7	4	0
Other/Visitors/Not Provided	7	4	3	0	0
Totals	97	67	17	4	9

Table 1: Connection with the University of those reporting their own experiences, including gender breakdown.

Reporting on behalf of someone else /bystander	Number of reports
Employees	9
Students	6
Other	2
Not Provided	6
Total	26

Table 2: Connection with the University of those reporting on behalf of someone else

[1] 'Other' may include visitors, contractors, or others with an association with the University.
[2] GNB: gender non-binary.
[3] PNS: prefer not to say.

2. Types of behaviour reported

Incidents may involve behaviour that spans the categories of bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment and therefore UCD Report and Support enables those reporting to select of more than one category. Bullying, harassment and sexual harassment were cited 152 times in 123 reports. Bullying was the behaviour that was reported most times and accounted for 38% of the total number of reported categories. Sexual Harassment accounted for 32% and harassment 30%. Table 3 provides the number of reports by category of behaviour and by the status of the reporting person. Figures 3 and 4 presents the categories of behaviour reported by gender of the reporting person.

Reported Behaviour	Employees	Students	Other	PNS	Total reports by category of behaviour
Bullying	28	21	6	2	57
Sexual Harassment	14	30	2	3	49
Harassment	13	23	6	4	46
Total number of behaviour categories reported					152

Table 3: Categories of behaviour reported by reporting persons' connection to the University.
Those reporting may select more than one category of behaviour. In 123 reports 152 behaviours were reported.
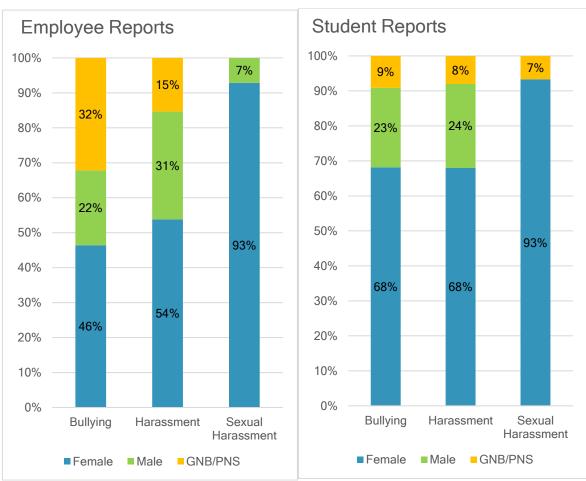

Figure 3 Reports made by employees, breakdown by their gender and category of behaviour reported.

Figure 4 Reports made by students, breakdown by their gender and category of behaviour reported.

Figure 5 shows the connection to the University of the person being reported. 53% of reports were made in relation to the behaviour of employees, 36% were made in relation to the behaviour of students and 3% related to the behaviour of others. 8% stated that they *did not know* or did not report the connection to the University of the person being reported. Table 4 provides the breakdown of 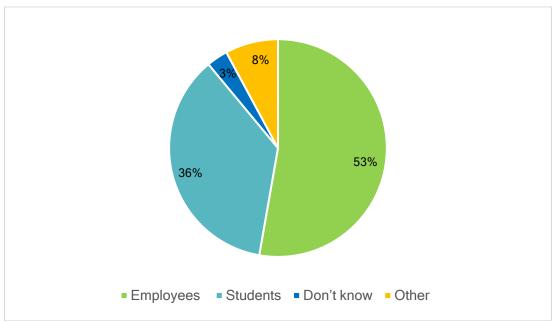reports by connection to the University of the person reporting and the connection to the University of the person being reported.

Figure 5: Connection with the University of the person being reported.

Employees reporting employee behaviour	38
Students reporting employee behaviour	22
Students reporting student behaviour	33
Employees reporting student behaviour	2
Other/did not say reporting student behaviour	8
Other/did not say reporting employee behaviour	6
Students reporting the behaviour of other / don't know	5
Employees reporting the behaviour of other / don't know	5
Other/visitor reporting the behaviour of other / don't know	4

Table 4: Reports by connection to the University of the person making the report and the person they are reporting.

3. When and where did the incidents occur?

60% of the reports received indicated that incidents had taken place on University property. 31% of those reporting selected 'other' and 5 % indicated that the incident(s) took place at an event (e.g., conference, field trip, club or society trip, social function, work assignment, sporting event). Figure 6 shows the breakdown of when the reported incidents took place. 37% of reported incidents had occurred on more than one occasion, over a period of time.
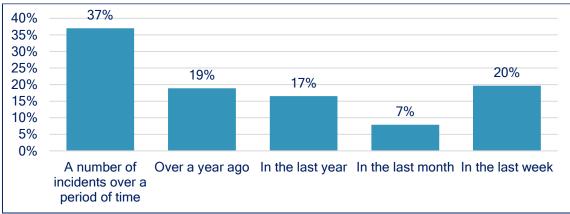

Figure 6: Breakdown of timeline of when reported incident(s) occurred.

4. Detailed behaviour

Those making reports through UCD Report and Support select from predetermined statements that they feel best describe their experience.

Bullying

- Bullying was reported 57 times across 123 reports. Of these reports 45 people reported about their own experiences and 12 people reported on behalf of someone else.
- Bullying was the most reported behaviour by employees, 28 incidents.
- The most selected descriptions of the behaviour included:
    - *Undermining behaviour*
    - *Intimidation / aggression*
    - *Humiliation*
    - *Blame for things beyond the person's control.*
    - *Exclusion*

Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Harassment was reported 49 times across 123 reports. Of these reports 38 people reported about their own experiences and 11 people reported on behalf of someone else.
- Sexual harassment was the most reported behaviour by students, 30 incidents.
- 24 reports of *sexual assault / coercive sexual intercourse* were made. Of these reports, 19 people reported about their own experiences and 5 people reported on behalf of someone else.
- Other behaviour reported included:
    - *sexually suggestive gestures;*
    - *continued suggestions for sexual activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome;*
    - *sexual advances, propositions, or pressure for sexual activity;*
    - *Physical contact such as unnecessary touching, patting or pinching or brushing against another body.*

Harassment

- Harassment was reported 46 times across 123 reports. Of these reports 38 people reported about their own experiences and 8 people reported on behalf of someone else.
- The most described of behaviour included:
    o *Verbal harassment - jokes, comments, ridicule or songs;*
    o *Written harassment - Written harassment - including text messages, emails or notices;*
    o *Physical harassment - jostling, shoving or any form of assault;*
    o *Intrusion - pestering, spying, or stalking.*
- Those reporting incidents of harassment were asked if they felt that the behaviour related to aspects of their identity or status. Table 5 provides the categories and the number of times those reporting selected. Those reporting may select more than one category.

Identity/Status	
Gender	22
Race /ethnicity	10
Civil status	7
Socio-economic status	6
Age	3
Disability	2

Table 5: Reported harassment linked to identity or status.
More than one identity/status category may be selected.

5.   Reasons for reporting anonymously

As more reports are made, analysis of the reasons why people are choosing to report anonymously will guide the University in tailoring and targeting its awareness raising activities to reassure and support students and employees in raising concerns. The most cited reasons for reporting anonymously made by employees and students are ranked in the tables below. Across employee and students reports almost 10% said that they '*wanted to make the University aware of my experience without making a complaint'*

Employees	
1	I'm worried that the person causing the offence would retaliate.
2	I have concerns it might affect my current/future career.
3	Nothing would be done if I made a complaint.

Table 6: Top 3 reasons employees reported anonymously.

Students	
1	I'm worried that the person causing the offence would retaliate.
2	Nothing would be done if I made a complaint.
3	I'm worried that I won't be believed.

Table 7: Top 3 reasons students reported anonymously.

6. Seeking Support

A key aim of UCD Report and Support is to ensure that those reporting are directed to appropriate university and external support services. 72% of those reporting about their own experiences indicated that they had already sought support. Those reporting can select more than one response to enable them to indicate if they have accessed different kinds of support. Nearly 50% indicated that they had sought support from a friend or a family member.

23% of those reporting indicated that they had not sought any support and 5% selected "*No, but having been made aware of the supports available through this tool I will seek support soon".* See Tables 8 and 9 for details on the statements selected.

Support sought	Number
Yes, I have sought support from a friend or family member.	48
Yes, I have sought support from an external support organization.	29
Yes, I have sought support from the University or a College.	28

Table 8: Those indicating that they had sought support selected the above responses.

No support sought	Number
I do not want to seek support right now.	19
No, but having been made aware of the supports available through this tool I will seek support soon.	4
No, but I will seek support soon.	2

Table 9: Those indicating that they had not sought support selected the above responses.

7. Future Monitoring and Reporting

The data collated using UCD Report and Support will be used to inform the development of initiatives and activities designed to prevent such behaviour, enhance supports for those experiencing bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct and promote a safe and respectful environment for all. From 2021 reports will be shared on a quarterly basis with EDI groups in Colleges / Units to enable timely, proactive and targeted responses to the data.

8. Next Steps

The following are the next steps planned in relation to the Report and Support tool in order to increase awareness of the tool, to ensure it is being used as effectively as possible and that it encourages people to seek support and to be aware of the informal and formal options for resolution.

- Publish this Report and Support tool report once it is approved at UMT;
- Review the tool following the completion of the Dignity and Respect review to ensure that it remains aligned with the revised and new policies;
- Instigate a promotional campaign to increase awareness of the tool and it purpose and embed into other communication channels on an ongoing basis including the campaign that will occur following the completion of the dignity and Respect review;
- Encourage local level engagement with the data by staff and students to identify themes arising through the appropriate channels locally and promote actions taken to address the themes;
- Monitor and report on actions taken locally and include in the next annual report;
- Continue to refine the tool to ensure meaningful data is being provided and explore possibilities as to how the tool could be used further to encourage people to seek support and make formal complaints;
- Monitor the number of reports that lead to formal complaints when the new Dignity and Respect complaint form is developed and assess how many sought support as a result of accessing the tool.

https://reportandsupport.ucd.ie/

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