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Findings from a National Study to Investigate How British Universities are Challenging Sexual Violence and Harassment on Campus

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Contents

Acknowledgements.....	1
Executive Summary	5
1. Introduction	19
The Study.....	20
Methods.....	21
Recruitment and Sample	21
Background of Survey Respondents	23
Table 1.1: Type of University Participants Work In	24
Table 1.2: Range of Roles Participants Work In	24
Getting Involved with Implementing the UUK (2016) Recommendations	25
Table 1.3: Reason for Involvement with Implementing the UUK (2016) Recommendations	25
By your immediate line manager.....	26
By your institution’s senior executive.....	27
By your institution’s student support services.....	28
By academics at your institution.....	28
The importance of the individual ‘champion’.....	29
The Activities Respondents are Engaged in to Implement the UUK (2016) Recommendations	29
Table 1.4: Activities Engaged in by Survey Participants’ Institutions	30
Where Participants Believed their Institution Is in Relation to Implementing UUK (2016) Recommendations	31
Shape of the Report	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Table 1.5: The Stage at Which Institutions are at in Delivering the UUK (2016) Recommendations	31
Key Points	32
Chapter 1 - Introduction - Recommendations	32
2. Prevention.....	32
Bystander Interventions	34
Targeting Broader Student Audiences.....	35
Embedding activities within the curriculum	36
Key Points	38
Chapter 2 - Prevention - Recommendations.....	39

3. Policy and Strategy	40
Key Points	42
Chapter 3 - Policy and Strategy - Recommendations	43
4. Reporting and Response.....	44
Responding to Student Allegations	44
University Remit and Responsibility.....	47
Barriers to Effective Responses.....	48
Key Points	50
Chapter 4 - Reporting and Response - Recommendations.....	50
5. Accountability of Universities.....	51
Making prevention mandatory	51
Making universities accountable	54
Figure 5.1 Numbers Indicating Preference for Options To Evidence Accountability of Universities in Addressing UUK (2016) Recommendations	55
The desirability of a mandatory duty	56
Graph 5.1: Indicating Opinions about a Mandatory Legal Duty for Universities to Address Sexual Violence/Harassment	56
Demonstrating implementation	59
Accountability of the Office for Students (OfS).....	61
Figure 5.2: Should the OfS Be Accountable to the Government for their Delivery of the UUK (2016) Recommendations	61
Key Points	61
Chapter 5 - Accountability of Universities - Recommendations.....	62
6. Research and Evaluation	64
Key Points	68
Chapter 6 - Research and Evaluation - Recommendations	69
7. Sustainability.....	70
Key Points	76
Chapter 7 - Sustainability - Recommendations.....	77
8. Barriers to implementing UUK (2016) recommendations	78
Table 8.1 Challenges Faced by Respondents When Implementing UUK (2016) Recommendations	79
- Challenges of Effecting Change in Large Organisations	81
Key Points	81

9. Facilitators to implementing UUK (2016) recommendations	82
Chapter 8 - Barriers to Implementation - Recommendations	82
Partnership Working	83
Specialist Services	85
Police	87
Student Unions	88
Internal University Partners	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Key Points	88
Chapter 9 - Facilitators to implementation	89
Conclusions and Recommendations	90
Recommendations	92
References	98

Executive Summary

The Universities UK Taskforce published its report on tackling violence against women, hate crime and harassment in UK universities in 2016 (hereafter UUK (2016) report), which identified key recommendations for change. Subsequently, HEFCE invited universities to apply for Catalyst funding to move this agenda forward. Many universities in England and Wales received HEFCE funding to tackle the violence against women (VAW) workstream, particularly in relation to sexual violence and harassment (henceforth SV), however, securing funding through this route was not a precondition for participation in this study. Our study investigates the barriers preventing, and the facilitators promoting, the implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations with respect to SV, as well as providing insight into where universities are situated as regards engagement with the SV agenda.

Aims

The aims of our study were:

- To establish what has been achieved since the UUK (2016) report to move the agenda forward in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
- To explore the barriers and facilitators to implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations.
- To recommend ways to embed the UUK (2016) recommendations further, across the HE sector.

Methods

In Autumn 2018, 134 university staff responded to our survey to explore the above aims. Both closed and open questions were used to enquire about how university processes are being navigated by university staff and the current state of play at universities to promote the UUK (2016) agenda, focusing on SV in universities. The survey also recruited volunteers for in-depth interviews (n=25). Basic descriptive statistical analysis was undertaken for the survey and key results reported.

Sample

Most survey respondents identify themselves as non-academic staff working in a range of professional and/or student support services including student unions.

- 78 survey respondents told us which universities they worked at.
- 54 universities were named across England, Wales, and Scotland.
- 54% are pre-1992 universities and 42% are post-1992 universities.
- Most respondents indicate that they became involved with the UUK agenda because they were asked to and/or it became part of their professional role/remit.
- 30% of respondents indicate that personal interest was a reason for their involvement in tackling this agenda.

Key Findings

Respondents are engaged with a range of activities to address the SV agenda: the development of policies to regulate behaviour; reporting and monitoring systems; specific campaigns and interventions targeted at students; responses and support for survivors; awareness training and disclosure training for staff; and partnership with external experts. However, most universities are at an early stage in their development of a response to the UUK (2016) recommendations and progress is mixed.

Prevention

- Universities are undertaking a range of prevention activities.
- *The Intervention Initiative* (Fenton et al., 2014) is the most often reported intervention utilised, followed closely by sexual consent interventions or workshops/ classes.
- Of those who have adopted *The Intervention Initiative*, many have adapted it to make it shorter or include other material.
- Universities are seen as responsible for educating citizens for life rather than having only a narrow focus on academic qualifications:
'...we are educating people or contributing to people's education for life in my view, not just to obtain a particular academic qualification or not purely for their eventual employability outcome...we have a unique opportunity I think to influence people's development socially in a whole range of ways...a key responsibility to bring in those

broader aspects of education around equality and diversity generally and around behaviours, absolutely, and I think we can begin to see some cultural shifts over time....we have a responsibility to do so.' (Participant 8, Student Support Staff)

- Many want to embed bystander-type initiatives into the curriculum:
- Delivery of prevention programmes often rely on volunteers from within the staff body and/or sometimes students willing to be trained, which can lead to concerns about sustainability.
- A key concern about prevention activities remaining voluntary is the gender bias identified by respondents in those who attend, i.e. that it is female students in certain subject areas who are more likely to attend:

'...when we have looked at who has been applying to go on the bystander workshops. We rarely get anyone from the sciences or engineering, or those sorts of STEM subjects...there's a gender bias there, that tends to be predominant in those, but also, maybe a feeling that it is not relevant to them, or it's not something that comes up in their everyday educational environment. So, we did think that, certainly, a lot of the people who went on the early courses that we were trying to promote it to, tended to be people who had had some recognition of these issues in their courses...' (Participant 19, Academic Staff)

Policy and Strategy

- Many institutions do not have a specific SV policy. More generic policies on bullying were cited as inappropriate for SV:
'We did have guidelines about bullying and harassment...however... we do not currently have a very clear and robust policy about staff-student relationships, about sexual violence in particular.' (Interview Participant 18, Student Support Staff).
- SV policies are, in practice, often of variable effectiveness.
- Policies appear to be less developed in cases of student SV allegations against staff and of sexual harassment.
- Varying levels of awareness and understanding about sexual violence and its impacts for students and staff underpin diverse institutional responses.
- Staff need increased confidence to manage allegations of SV and understand actions that the university can take:

'We also have a protocol for dealing with the accused, so the people who are accused of sexual assault, as a student. Before any outcome is determined we have a responsibility to both parties. But I think we are still struggling and grappling with what it means to investigate or work alongside the police to investigate sexual harassment and how that translates into action that the university can take.' (Participant 2, Student Support)

Reporting and Response

- Most institutions intend to improve their response systems for students experiencing SV and anonymous online reporting systems are a favoured method for doing so:
‘...there is an improving response...when I see cases that are ending in really dissatisfying outcomes for all parties involved, or cases that are incredibly delayed and the delay is on the behalf of the university, and I see students on either side of the fence, the impact that the investigation has on them, it’s really difficult to call it effective. I think it’s much better than it was’. (Participant 13, Student Support Staff)
- Concerns are raised about a gap between having policy statements about responses and consistent enactment of that policy in practice: training and resources are highlighted as crucial in ensuring policy is enacted effectively.
- Where reporting systems work, student feedback is often very positive:
‘...we have a really robust system for students...an online disclosing tool...if students do make an identified disclosure, they are immediately contacted by a member of the disclosure response team...we talk through all of the different options of support available...empower them to make the decision that is right for them, we facilitate next steps so that it is easy to access other forms of support if required. Out of all the students that we surveyed and asked for feedback after appointments, 100% of them have said that they found the service useful and that they felt it gave them the confidence to know what the next steps were and how to progress forward after what had happened.’ (Participant 16, Student Support Staff)
- HEIs’ responses depend on students reporting to them, and several barriers are identified that might prevent them from doing so. Building trust between the university and students is seen as key to ensuring that students will report.
- As well as encouraging students to see universities as a safe place to report to about experiences of SV, participants also point to the need to ensure staff are trained and supported to receive disclosures.
- Senior management require increased knowledge and understanding of the distinction and relationship between reporting and prevalence of sexual violence/harassment.
- Providing suitable support to the accused is sometimes seen as more problematic than providing support to the victim.

Accountability of Universities

- Most interview respondents believe that prevention activities should be made mandatory by being embedded in the curriculum (c.f. Prevention - Chapter 2).
- Under a third are more ambivalent about this, worried that forcing students to engage will not achieve the wider aims to change culture.

- Regardless of whether respondents are in favour of mandatory prevention or not, they also raise the need for extra resources to embed prevention in the curriculum.
- Many think support and investment by UUK, OfS and government to achieve cultural change in the long term is required:
 ‘Having a centralized database of campaign tools, information, and resources which could be accessed by member institutions is a far better resource and benchmark option than league tabling [as an incentive] if the goal is genuine collaborative change.’ (Survey respondent)
- The overwhelming majority of respondents believe that universities should be accountable for their implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations.
- Many survey respondents who completed this question, said they want to see a mandatory legal duty on universities to prevent and respond effectively to SV. A minority did not want a legal duty. A large proportion of survey respondents see advantages to a mandatory legal duty on universities to prevent and respond to SV.
 ‘[I]f it was mandatory, that’s when it falls from almost a campaign into something that legally has to be done. I think saying something has to be done, it must be done; if you say that to a senior member of staff, they know it is required, it is not something that is just an add-on. So, yes, I think making it mandatory is a good idea’. (Participant 17, Student Support Staff)
- Survey respondents in favour of a mandatory legal duty think that it would help to emphasise the importance of the issue, reduce fears about reputational damage and improve resourcing:
 ‘Too many universities see VAW as not happening here and are too concerned about reputational damage.’ (Survey respondent)

 ‘There is still a hesitation by a number of senior staff to meaningfully respond to SV as it’s [sic] 'difficult' or 'uncomfortable'. However, this could be worked around if there was a mandatory legal duty, in such a way as to enforce a duty of care to our students.’ (Survey respondent)
- Even survey respondents who are not enthusiastic about legal duties cannot think of any alternative to legal obligations to bring about change.
- Very few respondents reject the use of a mandatory duty.
- As an alternative to a legal duty, the use of a kite mark to indicate compliance based on accreditation and measures in league tables is most favoured. There is little support for fines on universities.
- The most popular options chosen to demonstrate implementation of the UUK SV recommendations are that responsibility for the work should be included in the role profile of university senior executives, regular ‘climate’ surveys of students’ experiences carried out, and the mandatory central reporting of student reports of SV.

- Survey respondents overwhelmingly support the suggestion that the OfS be accountable to Government for their delivery of the UUK (2016) recommendations.

Research and Evaluation

It is crucial that the evidence base about the prevalence of SV in universities, as well as what works to prevent and respond to sexual violence on campus are underpinned and developed by evidence collected through research and evaluation.

- A wide range of research and evaluation activities are reported. The most commonly reported evaluation activity is online anonymous reporting tools for students experiencing SV. This is not research but is widely seen as an evaluative measure of the success of introducing reporting systems and raising awareness about SV and harassment.
- Other research approaches reported are feedback from participants and university-wide surveys. The latter can provide baseline data to support longitudinal change and provide evidence of the particular localised issues within an institution. The former is of limited empirical value since it does not provide any 'objective' measure of behaviour or culture change.
- Research methodologies adopting pre-/post-measures, are most often reported in relation to bystander intervention activities.
- Overall, research is most likely to be undertaken by student services or academics.
- The range of types of research methodologies used and the source of the research raises questions about the rigour of the methodologies and the evidence being produced of effectiveness and 'what works'.
- Lecturers/ researchers are less likely to know of research being undertaken compared to those in other roles e.g. student services.
- Academic research staff working in the field have been involved with research developments to inform the work of their institution in implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations in just over half of responses and this is *more likely* in post-1992 universities.
- A small number of survey respondents highlight that academic research is not necessarily supported or acted upon by senior management.
- Gaining ethical approval for studies can also be difficult for some researchers due to institutional fears for their university's reputation.

Sustainability

Survey respondents and interview participants whose universities received HEFCE Catalyst

funding to develop their responses to SV were asked about the sustainability of such initiatives beyond the Catalyst funding. The key points are as follows:

- Not all survey respondents received Catalyst funding for their SV work. However, for over a quarter of those that did, the ending of the funding is going to create an issue for sustainability, and over half said that it might do so.
- For those survey respondents (n=6) who are confident the work would continue, they explain that their institution will be picking up the costs of whatever the Catalyst funding had covered, typically a paid member of staff.
- Most respondents are concerned about the sustainability of this work and conceive of resources in broader terms than simply financial, including staff time, workload and capacity, organization of timetabling, availability of venues and administrative support; and locate these concerns within a broader context of already overstretched student services, staff shortages and underfunded student unions:

‘...this is something I’ve been doing entirely on top of my workload. It has been quite a significant additional burden...In the first couple of years, it was quite exhausting, because there was a lot more hands-on work, and we were very much initiating and implementing everything....it’s still something I do in addition to my regular work.’ (Participant 19, Academic Staff)

‘...A lot of people were very supportive but whether they actually had the time to devote to helping us...it’s part of a broader thing about taking the problem seriously and seeing it as part of the university’s remit to engage. It needs more than one person preferably, but it needs buy-in...I think it will be something that perhaps falls off the agenda where there’s no immediate push for the institution to deal with that.’ (Participant 10, Academic Staff)

- Some interventions such as bystander approaches rely on staff and student volunteers to train and deliver interventions. This has implications for the work over the longer term, and points to the need for a coordinator to oversee the long-term organisation of these interventions.

Barriers to Implementing Furthering the UUK (2016) Report Recommendations

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the challenges they had within their institutions in progressing their activities to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations. By far the most prevalent challenge reported (24%, n=37) is receiving verbal support but insufficient investment of resources (staff, time, finances). Only a quarter of respondents to this question (n=17) say they have not experienced any problems at their university.

- Survey respondents most often identify a lack of resource as a barrier to implementing the recommendations of the UUK (2016) report.

- Post-1992 universities face more challenging institutional contexts, and are statistically more likely than pre-1992 universities to report problems both with securing 'senior enough' management buy-in, and challenging perceptions that implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations is not a priority for them:
 '[T]he vice-chancellor in particular doesn't want to touch the issue at all. Others know the work is going on, but nobody has put their head above the parapet to put their name on it yet.' (Participant 20, Student Support Staff)

 'The lack of perception of it being important. The tiny pockets that have happened (which are great in themselves) I think are possibly imbuing senior managers with the sense that work has been done by mid-level managers - but upon closer inspection this is clearly not the case at all, and my university is years behind others in the agenda.' (Survey Respondent).
- Three key barriers were identified to promoting the UUK (2016) recommendations: a lack of understanding of the seriousness of SV in universities; a lack of resources (e.g. financial, staff, time, expertise), including concerns about sustainability; and the challenges of effecting change in large organisations:
 'The size of the institution and hence the number of people who need to be involved before authority can be given to make decisions. Staff with expertise in specific fields, but no awareness of the agenda being in control of decisions has been frustrating. IT and legal/ data protection have been the most significant difficulties. Marketing have also been challenging in terms of wanting to come up with their own ideas rather than take guidance - with little awareness of the topic and sensitivities.' (Survey respondent)

Facilitators to Implementing the UUK (2016) Report Recommendations

A thematic analysis of the free text responses to the question asking what makes the most positive impact on promoting the UUK (2016) recommendations at their institution produces the following factors:



The specialist expertise and knowledge of sexual and domestic violence and abuse (DVA) organisations are recognised as essential to enhance the support offered to students and staff, in addition to:

- Senior management buy-in, backed up with adequate and sustainable resources in a strategy that takes a 'whole institution' approach and which is supported by academic research and expertise, and partnership working both within the university and with external partners.
- The delivery of disclosure and/or awareness training by SV and DVA specialist organisations to university staff.
- Having a campus presence such as attending events and providing information e.g. in the form of a stall.
- Contribution to university advisory boards/ task force groups.
- Involvement in producing university campaigns and publications.
- Providing direct support and counselling services within student support services.
- Delivering prevention activities such as bystander programmes.

Furthermore, the importance of partnership working with external partners is seen as key by all interviewees in enabling universities to develop best practice and implement UUK (2016) recommendations. For example, in developing direct referral routes from universities to specialist SV and DVA services:

‘...we are quite lucky because we’ve always had really good relationships with our stakeholders prior to all this work happening, so the police, the council, the SU, the Rape and Sexual Support Services...’ (Participant 11, Student Support Staff)

Recommendations

Since this research was conducted the OfS have produced a statement of ‘minimum expectations’ for universities. We do not consider that this is sufficient nor that it supersedes the recommendations in this report.

In order to build on existing work and to provide consistency across the sector, it is essential for the OfS to lead on embedding the UUK (2016) recommendations in a sustainable way.

Achieving ‘culture change’ is multi-faceted and needs to be operationalised at multiple levels including governance beyond individual universities. This is reflected in our recommendations below:

1. Universities must embed implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations into properly supported and resourced working practices and governance processes, avoiding reliance on individual champions rather than institutional commitment.
2. The OfS should develop an audit tool and assess where individual universities are at in terms of implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations as part of a body of work geared towards attaining consistency across the sector.

Prevention Recommendations

Prevention is a core activity that many universities are engaging in, however many prevention interventions used are not evidence-based, and neither are prevention activities routinely evaluated to assess their effectiveness.

3. UUK should develop a clear working definition of what constitutes ‘evidence-based’ approaches for universities to use when academic researchers are not involved in order to better evaluate their prevention activities and provide examples of academic good practice.
4. Universities should use evidence-based interventions for prevention activities and evaluate their impact.

5. Universities should embed and integrate evidence-based prevention into the curricula
6. The OfS must require embedded evidence-based prevention as part of the conditions for registration in order to ensure consistency across the sector.

Policy and Strategy Recommendations

Our findings indicate that UUK and OfS are best placed to support universities to develop specific sexual violence and harassment policies, procedures and codes of conduct as follows:

7. UUK should provide a best practice template for a sexual violence and harassment policy which includes disciplinary procedures with key non-negotiables, and which can be minimally tailored to suit each university's unique institutional context. This should address both student - student and staff – student allegations; and provide guidance on how alleged perpetrators should be managed.
8. UUK should provide best practice templates for codes of conduct for students and staff which explicitly address sexual violence and harassment.
9. Universities must adopt policy and codes of conduct based on the templates and ensure clear ownership within governance processes in order to facilitate monitoring implementation.
10. The OfS must require the adoption and implementation of a policy and code of conduct based on the templates as part of the conditions of registration and should develop audit measures to robustly monitor implementation and effectiveness in order to ensure consistency across the sector.

Reporting and Response Recommendations

There are a variety of initiatives currently undertaken within the sector to deal with allegations of sexual violence, but this is very much a 'postcode lottery'. To enhance support for students and staff the following recommendations are made:

11. UUK should provide a best practice specialist-informed template on how to encourage safe and supportive reporting, which is the cornerstone for all effective responses.
12. Resource must be invested by universities in training staff for support roles and investigative or other procedural roles. Training should be delivered by specialists working in the field of SV.
13. Universities must continuously publicise and enhance the visibility of their reporting processes and support mechanisms in order to build confidence and trust to report and access support

14. The OfS must require the adoption of safe and supportive reporting and staff training at scale as part of the conditions of registration to ensure consistency across the sector.

Recommendations for the Accountability of Universities

To assist universities to be more accountable for ‘culture change’, we urge UUK, OfS and the Government to respond to the following recommendations:

15. UUK should implement a kite mark system such as Athena SWAN as a way of rewarding compliance and best practice.
16. UUK and OfS should work with the compilers of league tables to include measures relating to the implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations.
17. OfS must include a measure of compliance into the National Student Survey (or its equivalent) survey.
18. Research into other jurisdictions must be commissioned to explore the best approaches for the mandatory implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations and the link between compliance and central government funding should be explicitly explored.
19. OfS must ensure the accountability of universities for the implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations through the conditions of registration.
20. UUK must provide a root and branch evaluation of the cost of ‘culture change’ and better guidance to the sector on what levels of resources are needed to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations.
21. OfS must explore methods to ensure consistency of funding across the sector for long-term sustainability (see Recommendation 33)
22. Government must now consider primary legislation to impose legal duties on universities to prevent and respond to sexual violence and harassment.
23. Government must ensure that the OfS is directly and transparently accountable for regulating universities’ compliance in a uniform, consistent, and sustainably resourced way.

Recommendations for Research and Evaluation

High quality research is essential to understand the scale of the problem and how best to prevent and respond to SV in university settings. The following recommendations are therefore made:

24. Universities should ensure that researchers are involved with evaluations of all interventions in order to produce robust data on their effectiveness and better

- evidence to underpin claims of best practice .
25. The safety and well-being of students and staff must be prioritised above reputational issues.
 26. UUK must provide specialist gold standard ethical guidance for researchers, ethics committees and senior management in the field of sexual violence and harassment research within universities to ensure research is able to be carried out and published.
 27. The OfS must ensure a direct complaint route for researchers, and compliance with ethical standards must be a condition of registration.

Recommendations to embed Sustainability

To sustain initiatives undertaken via the Catalyst funding or other funding sources:

28. Universities must employ dedicated staff on secure contracts to oversee the promotion and implementation of the 2016 recommendations.
29. Universities must ensure that SV is part of the senior management governance processes in order to provide verbal support backed with sufficient and sustained financial resources.
30. The OfS must require governance processes to be in place and must ensure that specialist training is available and taken up by those in a governance role as part of the conditions of registration.

Building on Good Practice

Whilst good practice is evident within the sector, we make the following recommendations to further advance the culture change agenda:

31. UUK and the OfS should constantly reinforce positive messages to senior management leadership across the HE sector about the importance and value of implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations.
32. The OfS must make the sustainable allocation of funding by every university a condition of registration, for example by requiring the ringfencing of a proportion of fee income.
33. The OfS must ensure that a baseline of resources are equally committed across institutions and should not allocate resources using a bidding system.
34. Universities must encourage internal partnership working across services and departments in order to achieve a whole institution approach to enacting the UUK (2016) recommendations.
35. Universities must implement partnership working with external organisations to

ensure that the necessary skills, knowledge and expertise in SV are engaged in the delivery of UUK (2016) recommendations, especially in relation to prevention, response and reporting activities.

36. The OfS must ensure that evidence of partnership working is a condition of registration.

1. Introduction

This is a report on a multi-method study exploring the extent to which universities across the United Kingdom (UK) have implemented the recommendations of the Universities UK 2016 Report, *Changing the Culture: Report of the Universities UK Taskforce examining violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students* (henceforth UUK (2016) report).

Our study focused on those recommendations targeting sexual harassment and violence (henceforth SV) because of the work we were already doing in this field (e.g. Fenton, et al., 2016; Roberts, et al., 2019; Donovan et al., 2020).

The UUK (2016) report was itself a response to the evidence of growing levels of, particularly, sexual violence, harassment and hate crime at universities (e.g. National Union of Students (NUS) 2010; NUS, 2011; NUS 2014); and the impacts of sexual harassment and violence for students' mental health and their academic study (e.g. Stenning, Mitra-Kahn and Gunby, 2012; NUS & 1752 Group, 2018).

SV is one form of violence and abuse that is disproportionately reported by women and girls and, as in the UUK (2016) report, is part of the continuum of violence against women (VAW) or violence against women and girls (VAWG) (Kelly, 1988). Both of these acronyms are used by participants throughout this report and whilst they are acronyms that have resonance for us and our work, we are aware of how their use can, albeit inadvertently, lead to heteronormative assumptions about who can be victimised and who the perpetrators are (e.g. Donovan & Barnes, 2019). Our approach is to refer to this continuum of violence as Gender-Based Violence in order to centre the importance of gender and to signal our intention to be more sensitive to the victimisation of those with intersectional identities.

To promote the achievement of the UUK (2016) recommendations the Higher Education Funding

Council for England (HEFCE) provided targeted, matched funding over two years, HEFCE Catalyst funding (hereafter Catalyst funding). Whilst this funding is welcome, it nonetheless raises questions about future sustainability, which this study also sought to explore.

The Study

The UUK (2016) report identified seven key components for change (UUK, 2016: p59):

1. A commitment from senior leadership.
2. Ensuring an institution-wide approach.
3. Prevention of incidents.
4. Enabling an effective response.
5. Managing situations where students have committed an offence.
6. Sharing of good practice.
7. Assessment of support needed with regards to online harassment.

These seven were presented as recommendations not instructions and therefore they provided the framework for our study to explore the extent to which they had been implemented with a focus on SV. The overall aims of the study were:

- To establish what has been achieved since the UUK (2016) report to move the agenda forward in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs);
- To explore the barriers and facilitators to implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations;
- To recommend ways to embed the UUK (2016) recommendations further, across the HE sector.

Shape of the Report

In our analysis of the subsequent survey and telephone interview data we identified the following themes that speak to the UUK (2016) recommendations and our aims in conducting the research. They provide the structure for the rest of the report, namely: prevention; policy and strategy; reporting and response; accountability of universities; research and evaluation; sustainability; barriers to implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations; and facilitators to implementation.



An institutional audit tool based on our findings is provided as a method of promoting the development of best practice².

Methods

This study aims guided the design of an online survey and follow-up telephone interviews. The survey had several sections and asked about: the HE institutions the participant belonged to; the participants' role, how they had got involved with implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations at their HEI and what support they had for this work; what they perceived as the barriers and facilitators for fulfilling the recommendations; what had been achieved at their HEI; what research and evaluation had been undertaken on the impact of their HEI's work; and whether they felt that there should be mandatory obligations for both HEIs and the Office for Students (OfS, formerly Higher Education Funding Council for England, HEFCE) to ensure the UUK (2016) recommendations are implemented.

Telephone interviews were also conducted with volunteers, most of whom were recruited through the survey. The interview schedule followed the core questions asked in the survey as outlined above but explored responses in more depth. Three of the research team took part in the interviews as part of a piloting of the interview schedule. Their transcripts have been included in the analysis.

Recruitment and Sample

Survey: An initial list of contacts was developed using details found on the HEFCE webpages of universities in England and Wales in receipt of HEFCE Catalyst funding for projects promoting the UUK (2016) recommendations in relation to SV. Contacts included academics, student support

² The audit tool can be accessed here: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/criva/selfassessmentchecklist2019.pdf>

services and student unions. Emails were also distributed via e-mail lists: CHANGECULTURE; Universities Against Gender Based Violence (UAGBV); and the Healthy Universities Network. The survey was initially sent mid-August 2018 and was open for approximately six weeks until the beginning of October 2018. Qualtrics provided a platform for the survey.

In total, 134 people consented to participate in the survey. Respondents could move through the survey without having to answer every question and, indeed, not all respondents answered all survey questions. The number who answered each question is indicated by the *n* figure and percentages are provided based on each question rather than the total sample. All percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number and this means that in some cases the percentages do not add up to 100%.

Basic statistical analysis has been undertaken and significant results are indicated. Mostly the data presented used a frequency procedure; where appropriate, responses have been compared using the type of university respondents worked at or respondent role as independent variables. Quantitative questions that were answered by less than a third of the total number of respondents are not included in the analysis. Throughout the survey we provide opportunities for open text responses to questions that we initially sought quantitative responses to. However, we also draw on the qualitative responses given to those survey questions answered by less than a third of respondents where responses are important to illuminate specific points.

Semi-structured Interviews: At the end of the online survey, participants were invited to participate in a confidential telephone interview to provide further detailed information. Twenty-five people volunteered through the survey itself, and 22 participated. We have also included data gathered from the research team in pilot interviews (total = 25).

Interview participants had various roles, responsibilities and job titles, however, due to concerns around confidentiality and anonymity, participants have been divided into two groups: Student

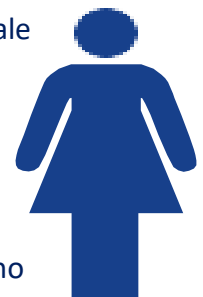
Support Staff (n=18) which includes those based in student unions, and academic staff (n=7). Three participants were male, and participants came from across England and Wales. Some participants had direct responsibility for implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations in their university. The sample is exploratory and therefore not representative of the sector as a whole. Qualitative interview data was analysed thematically (Braun and Clarke, 2006) using NVivo software.

Ethical approval for the study was given by the three universities involved in the design of the study. The email to potential survey respondents contained an anonymised link to the survey and respondents were asked to opt into the survey after reading the initial invitation. Email recipients were asked to forward the email to an appropriate colleague if they were not in a position to complete the survey e.g. did not have sufficient knowledge. It was not possible to track whether this took place.

Background of Survey Respondents

Demographic data about survey respondents and their HEIs are:

- Most respondents (90%, n=94) who provided details of their gender are female (90%) and 9 are male (10%).
- 54 universities are identified in responses from 78 participants (58% of the total who participated) who chose to respond to this question.
- 46% (n=45) respondents are situated in student services.
- 105 respondents indicate their geographical location and most parts of Britain are represented except for some parts of Scotland and Wales, and we had no responses from Northern Ireland.
- Demographic information pertaining to ethnicity or disability was not collected.



The type of university worked at was reported by 105 (78% of total) survey respondents.



Table 1.1, below, indicates that the highest responses came from pre-1992 universities (including Russell Group Universities and University of London Colleges).

Table 1.1: Type of University Participants Work In

Type of University	Number of Respondents (%)
Pre-1992	57 (54%)
Post-1992	44 (42%)
Other HEI	4 (4%)
Total	105 (100%)

Survey respondents were asked to indicate all the roles that they had occupied in the last 3 years. A total of 108 responses were received from 97 respondents (72% of total). Table 1.2 shows that the largest group of participants work in student services. Those who indicate 'Other' (n=20, 20.6%) include a range of roles across universities such as in Human Resources, Welfare or Engagement services and Student Union Staff, reinforcing the fact that most participants in this survey have a non-academic role within their university.

Table 1.2: Range of Roles Participants Work In

Respondents' Roles	Number of Respondents (%)
Student Services	45 (46%)
Academic	30 (31%)
Student Union – Wellbeing Officer/ Other Officer	13 (13%)
Other	20 (21%)
Total	108 (100%)

Getting Involved with Implementing the UUK (2016)

Recommendations

Survey respondents were asked to indicate how they became involved in implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations and were invited to select more than one option in response. We received 160 responses from 92 (69% of the total) survey respondents. Table 1.3 indicates that most participants became involved because it became part of their job to do so and/or it became part of their job to ensure that they were implemented, possibly by other people. Only 32 participants indicate that it was their personal interest in SV that was the catalyst for their involvement. Those indicating 'Other' (n=12) included those who describe their role as being newly created to implement the recommendations, as well as a combination of the other options, including professional interest.

Table 1.3: Reason for Involvement with Implementing the UUK (2016) Recommendations

Reason for involvement with implementing UUK (2016) recommendations	Number of Respondents (%)
My professional role at the institution meant that this agenda became part of my remit	33 (36%)
Personal interest in the issues was the catalyst for my involvement	32 (35%)
HEFCE Catalyst funding was the reason I became involved	25 (28%)
My professional role at the institution meant that this agenda became my responsibility	23 (25%)
Research interests in the issues was the catalyst for my involvement	20 (13%)
Other	12 (8%)
I was asked by somebody in my University's senior exec to become involved with promoting this agenda	9 (6%)
I was asked by my line manager to become involved with promoting this agenda	6 (4%)
Total	160 (100%)

There is a *significant relationship* between working in a pre-1992 university and being asked to

become involved with implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations by a line manager, $F(1,n=101)=4.06$, $p = .05$. Catalyst funding provided to be the reason why 20% of lecturers and 15% of those based in student services/ other university roles became involved.

Academic staff (90%) are far more likely to indicate that personal interest is a reason for their involvement than participants from student services/other university roles (31%). For the latter group, involvement is much more likely to be linked to their professional role at the institution which means that addressing SV and implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations becomes part of their remit (54% of those based in student services/ other university roles, compared to 10% of academic staff).

Survey respondents were asked to explain the extent to which their work to implement the UUK recommendations is 'supported in general terms' within their institutions by their immediate line managers, senior executive, student support services and academics. Whilst few responded to the Likert-style question, more provide qualitative responses.

By your immediate line manager

Qualitative information was provided by 27 survey respondents, most of whom indicate that their line managers are supportive of their involvement to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations. Nine respondents report that they are fully supported and give examples of policies, funding, and training. Five say that they are supported and provided with time or capacity to carry out this work:

'[F]ully supported and time is allocated to resource this fully.' (Survey respondent)

Four cite their line managers as leads of this work:

'[Line manager] has been the driving force in ensuring a Catalyst bid was put in and that adequate resource was put in place to ensure meaningful change could be achieved.' (Survey respondent)

Occasionally support is felt to be theoretical and that there is less support for the real impact on time:

'[Line manager has been] excited by research opportunities, less supportive of general demands on time and thrust of work.' (Survey respondent)

Only four respondents indicated that support was lacking.

By your institution's senior executive

Qualitative responses were provided by 32 respondents. Seven describe their senior management team as 'fully' supportive. For example:

'FULLY Our Pro-VC Chairs the taskforce and has been wholly supportive in the work we have been undertaking.' (Survey respondent)

'The person heading it up in my Uni, the Head of Student Services, is very involved in making sure it happens, and happens in the right way.' (Survey respondent)

'Provided with capacity to undertake work; resource to attend events and interest in progress.' (Survey respondent)

Three other respondents describe senior management as proactive leads or 'champions' of this work. Two others mention that senior management sit on or chair related committees.

Seven respondents, however, indicate that there is a lack of identifiable actions, funding or verbal expressions of support. For example:

'Senior executive supportive but thus far mainly rhetoric as opposed to actions.' (Survey respondent)

'I believe they have a knowledge of this but are not visibly active in supporting the project.' (Survey respondent)

'Lip service' is paid to the agenda by meeting the minimum requirements but no meaning [sic] commitment to wider cultural change.' (Survey respondent)

Qualitative survey responses indicate that qualified or less than positive action or support can also be linked to a lack of understanding about the issues related to sexual violence:

'After solid presentation of research project's results their first question could be summed up as 'but what about the poor men?' (Survey respondent)

'Some sit on our Steering Group and are very aware/ supportive, others are not aware, or

particularly interested in fully supporting.’ (Survey respondent)

‘We don't have explicit buy in to the work, but neither do we have explicit resistance to it.’ (Survey respondent)

By your institution’s student support services

Qualitative responses were provided by 33 survey respondents. In the main the responses are positive. Six describe student services as fully supportive and five explain that it is primarily the responsibility of student services to lead this work in their institution. Eight describe working closely with, or receiving support from, student services around implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations.

‘FULLY - The team have contributed positively throughout the HEFCE project but also generally in terms of wanting to know more about the prevalence of sexual misconduct and the role they can play in addressing it and supporting survivors...staff were enrolled on to a 6-day development programme relating to sexual violence to enhance their knowledge and skills. These staff now deliver what they have learnt to others within the department.’ (Survey respondent)

‘The agenda is being integrated across Student Services, including Student Support and Wellbeing, where a Wellbeing Adviser specializing in sexual assault and harassment has been hired.’ (Survey respondent)

Five responses are less positive with two being unclear or unsure about whether student services have been supportive and three pointing to a distinction between the management of student services (who were seen as not supportive) and frontline staff (who were seen as eager to be involved).

‘Rhetoric but little action in terms of management and concrete action, but welfare themselves fully recognise the need and are hugely supportive.’ (Survey respondent)

By academics at your institution

Qualitative information was provided by 33 survey respondents. Respondents were careful to qualify their responses about academics, making a distinction between those academics who are interested in the issues and/or researching them being very supportive with their research, sitting

on related steering groups, attending training or briefings and cascading information, and those who are not (yet) aware of the issues and/or who are not interested.

‘Some absolutely engaged and enthusiastic, some not.’ (Survey respondent)

‘Very much depends on the academic, some are champions, and this benefits the whole department. Some do not engage often based on prior experience with the topic.’ (Survey respondent)

‘Little research at this institution in the field of VAW.’ (Survey respondent)

‘Several academics are members of the Sexual Violence Against Students Steering Group that works on the UUK recommendations.’ (Survey respondent)

The importance of the individual ‘champion’

Interview responses to questions about various aspects of institutional support highlight the importance of key individuals – typically women - and/or alliances of key individuals championing the work within the institution. Champions might be senior managers who are able to use their structural position to promote the work needed to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations.

Other times individuals in student services describe building alliances with individual academic staff to promote the work. Individuals might also become champions as a result of conducting research on the issues, then using the findings to lobby senior management, make contacts and build alliances with others across the institution to promote the issues (see Donovan et al., 2020).

Some interviewees explained that they have been conducting work on sexual and domestic violence amongst students before the UUK (2016) report was published and it is important to remember that the work to address SV on campus did not start with the UUK (2016) report.

The Activities Respondents are Engaged in to Implement the UUK (2016) Recommendations

Survey respondents were asked which of the listed activities they or their institution were developing to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations (see table 1.4 below) and 73 (52% of total) survey respondents provided answers.

Between 80-90% of respondents indicate that their institutions are involved with developing reporting and monitoring systems (n=66, 90%), developing support for individual students who have experienced harassment (n=65, 89%), awareness raising campaigns (n=63, 86%), the development of policies (n=61, 84%), and staff training to deal with disclosures (n=59, 81%).

Between 75-77% report their institution is developing links with external agencies to enhance support provided to students (n=56, 77%) and developing specific interventions (n=55, 75%). Just under a third report that their institution has developed an innovative reporting system (n=21,29%) and 24 (33%) respondents indicate their institution has done 'Other'.

The telephone interviews highlighted the importance respondents invest in online reporting tools as key to encouraging students to report and access support.

Staff training is also considered important to ensure a positive and effective response when students seek such support.

Interview data also point to the need for different kinds of training needed by different groups of staff within institutions that is tailored to their role and position. For example, the need for general training for everybody about awareness of new SV policies and procedures and the need for specialist training about disclosure of SV for specific groups of staff.

'Other' was selected by 5% (n=24) and included a broad range of activities including: staff training for disciplinary hearings; out of hours emergency responders; student survivor groups; training key stakeholders in the local nighttime economy; information leaflets for students; specialist officers from external providers; consent workshops; risk assessments; review of disciplinary system and procedures; participation in local MARAC; and conducting victim or climate surveys.

Table 1.4: Activities Engaged in by Survey Participants' Institutions

Activities being developed to promote the UUK recommendations	Number of Respondents (%)
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Development of reporting and monitoring systems	66 (90%)
Support to individual students who have experienced sexual harassment or violence	65 (89%)
Campaigns to raise awareness of sexual violence and harassment	63 (86%)
Development of policies to regulate behaviours	61 (84%)
Staff training to deal with disclosures	59 (81%)
Development of links with external agencies to enhance support to students	56 (77%)
Development of specific interventions	55 (75%)
Other	24 (33%)
Innovative reporting systems (e.g. mobile phone apps)	21 (29%)
Total	470 (100%)

Where Participants Believed their Institution Is in Relation to Implementing UUK (2016) Recommendations

As Table 1.5 suggests, most participants believe that their institutions are in the very early stages of delivery: only just over a fifth indicated that their university were ‘fairly’ far on with their strategy, had had one review and identified next steps. The largest proportion (36%) said they had delivered some interventions but had not had a review, identified learning or identified next steps, and 27% had not delivered any specific interventions.

Table 1.5: The Stage at Which Institutions are at in Delivering the UUK (2016) Recommendations

Stage at which institutions are at in delivering the UUK (2016) recommendations	Numbers of Respondents (%)
We’ve got a strategy and working group and have launched specific interventions but have not yet reviewed progress or identified learning/ next steps	28 (36%)
We’re fairly far on with our strategy and have had at least one review, findings from research and identification of next steps	16 (21%)
Right at the beginning, starting to scope out the possibilities, identify key stakeholders, develop a strategy	11 (14%)

We've got a strategy and a working group but have yet to launch any specific interventions	10 (13%)
Other please explain	8 (10%)
I can't answer this question	5 (6%)
Total	78 (100%)

Key Points

- The vast majority of respondents who provided their gender are female.
- Greater numbers of survey respondents work at pre-1992 universities.
- Almost half of all survey respondents work in student services.
- The most common reasons for involvement in the SV agenda include: (1) respondents' professional role at the institution meant that this agenda became part of their remit; (2) personal interest; and (3) HEFCE Catalyst funding.
- The activities engaged in are broadly in line with those recommended by UUK (2016).
- Most institutions are at an early stage in their development of a response to the UUK (2016) recommendations and progress is mixed.

Chapter 1 – Introduction - Recommendations

1. Universities must embed implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations into properly supported and resourced working practices and governance processes, avoiding reliance on individual champions over institutional commitment.
2. The OfS should develop an audit tool and assess where individual universities are at in terms of implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations as part of a body of work geared towards attaining consistency across the sector.

2. Prevention



Prevention of sexual violence and harassment is one of the cornerstones of the UUK (2016) report. Prevention presents universities with a challenge to deliver interventions that they have not previously provided to ensure that students are given opportunities to understand and define SV, and to promote ways of changing the culture and challenge behaviours that can lead to SV. Survey respondents (n=52 [39%] providing 89 responses) describe a wide range of prevention activities:

35% (n=31) reporting using an active bystander intervention based on *The Intervention Initiative* (Fenton et al., 2014, 2016).

In a follow-up question asking which active bystander intervention had been used/adapted: nine (21%) said they had used *The Intervention Initiative* in its entirety; fifteen (35%) explained that they had adapted *The Intervention Initiative* to make it shorter; seven had adapted the *Intervention Initiative* to be delivered online; and six had adapted it with other material (14%).

16% (n=14) reported using active bystander interventions based on another model such as *Bringing in the Bystander*; *Epigeum Packages*; and *Scottish Women's Aid Get Savi* materials.

One university had developed their own intervention in conjunction with their local VAWG organization. The *Good Lad Initiative* was also mentioned in this list, which is clearly a prevention activity, however, it is not clear that this is an active bystander intervention.

33%, (n=29) reported using sexual consent interventions.

17% (n=15) reported 'Other': These answers included those who were developing their own workshops and examples of what can be considered part of the university response to sexual violence. Five interview participants also described the use of arts-based projects including film, theatre, crafts, dance and exhibitions as prevention activities.

Over a third reported that the evidence-based *The Intervention Initiative* is at the heart of their prevention activities, yet most other participants indicate the use of prevention activities that are not known to be evidence-based. The latter are not in keeping with the recommendations of the UUK (2016) report which states that only 'an evidence-based bystander intervention programme' (UUK, 2016: 58) is recommended as a prevention activity.

What is interesting to note is that the Catalyst Fund also stipulated the use of the freely available *The Intervention Initiative*, yet it appears that the funding was sometimes used to purchase other models including ones not specifically designed for a UK audience. It is not known whether all of the other interventions are underpinned with an evidence base, highlighting the need for research and evaluation of interventions, which we return to later.

Bystander Interventions

Interview participants explain the logistical problems presented by introducing, rolling out and embedding an intervention like *The Intervention Initiative* (Fenton et al., 2014, 2016). The time needed to achieve this, and the resource commitment required (in staff training and delivery time, in the practicalities and logistics of timetabling and room booking, the strategy for recruitment of participants etc) make this a significant undertaking and it is often targeted at new, incoming students:

'So, working with her over the last 18 months to 2 years, we've started to roll out bystander training, we started to roll out some work around being vulnerable in the

evening and night-time economy...This Fresher's intake now...delivered 10 presentations across 7 colleges to probably 1,500 students simply on that.' (Participant 20, Student Support Staff)

Some participants point to the problems of sustainability and/or of implementing *The Intervention Initiative* as originally conceived in the face of competing priorities within universities. We return to the problem of a lack of resources below.

Targeting Broader Student Audiences

Seventeen interview participants describe other kinds of prevention activities targeting all students. These include poster and digital campaigns, blogs, dedicated webpage/website and social media posts, films, consent messages or pledges, theatre performances, the use of the White Ribbon campaign, stalls, and Reclaim the Night Marches. Some universities describe week-long events where workshops are held.



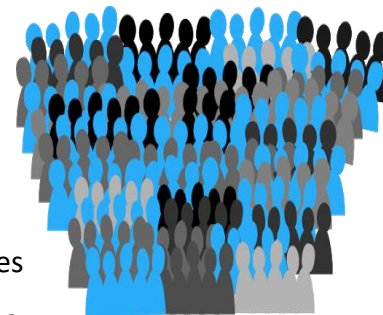
'We've got huge banners around Welcome Week everywhere...Everybody recognises it. We've got t-shirts, we've got badges, we've got drink mats, water bottles and reusable cups with it on, pens, and I think that's actually been again another critical success factor, everybody knows what this is, they recognise it and they will have, maybe their own but they have some understanding of what it's about and it's everywhere and that's been quite key actually.' (Participant 8, Student Support Staff)

These types of activities can be widespread and targeted on campus, in halls of residence, and spaces in the night-time economy. A small number of respondents also mention the use of night marshals or stewards, which might include trained students, on nights out who look out for particularly vulnerable students and give out water, lollipops, plasters etc.

Eleven interview participants explain that the availability of resources underpins decisions to target specific students for training and/or to receive interventions rather than targeting all students. For example, prevention training might be compulsory for student leaders, representatives, residence advisors, welfare advisors, clubs, or societies but voluntary for other students. Six interview participants explain that many activities such as bystander training are targeted at first year students. These respondents believe that it is best when training is ongoing

rather than 'one-off', but resources of time, staff, and logistical management of timetabling and room booking make this difficult.

Some universities train students to help roll out interventions to large numbers of students and others use a mandatory online course or quiz that has to be completed prior to starting university - in the same way as, for example, a fire safety course. Whilst this is seen as helpful in terms of sustainability, it is also seen as unhelpful by some who feel messages need to be repeated rather than given in a one-off, out of context, way.



References are also made to the need to evaluate the impact of interventions, which we return to below.

Finally, although staff in non-welfare or frontline support roles from across universities are being offered training, attendance is often voluntary. Interview participants generally wanted larger numbers of staff to attend prevention training around SV in order to improve their knowledge, awareness, and skills.

Embedding activities within the curriculum

Interview participants were asked what might be done through curriculum development to reduce sexual harassment and violence. Seventeen believe that prevention activities and



interventions could, or should, be embedded within the curriculum. Reasons for this include their concern that voluntary prevention activities might only be attended by those who are sympathetic to, or have an interest in, SV issues, whilst those who need the sessions might be the least likely to attend.

'...when we have looked at who has been applying to go on the bystander workshops. We rarely get anyone from the sciences or engineering, or those sorts of STEM subjects. I suppose, there's a gender bias there, that tends to be predominant in those, but also, maybe a feeling that it is not relevant to them, or it's not something that comes up in

their everyday educational environment. So, we did think that, certainly, a lot of the people who went on the early courses that we were trying to promote it to, tended to be people who had had some recognition of these issues in their courses...' (Participant 19, Academic Staff)

Compulsory interventions embedded within the curriculum are generally believed to provide a way to address any selective and/or gender bias in attendance. Whilst such developments are believed to have the intended benefit of improving the university environment, some participants make the case that universities should have a role in educating students to be good citizens beyond the university and to help to address SV as a bigger social problem. Indeed, universities are understood by some as very well placed to contribute to addressing and reducing SV more generally. This is described as both a unique opportunity and responsibility.

'...resources that have been developed at the moment are very much voluntary...students who engage with that are very likely to be self-selecting, so they are likely to already have an awareness... we do need some form of compulsory training around consent in particular but also more generally around what is and isn't appropriate behaviour both on and off campus....I'm a bit sceptical about whether that would transform the attitudes of all students but it would at least send a message that the university takes these things seriously, that it's the university's responsibility.' (Participant 1, Academic Staff)

'We are already looking at how to embed resilience, whatever that means, into the curriculum. Wellbeing, the whole range of what it makes us being human, we have dealt with employability and we've done a really good job with that...but we need our young people to be the right kind of human being when they leave us, and definitely there's a growing need for us to be able to do that.' (Participant 20, Student Support Staff)

'...we are educating people or contributing to people's education for life in my view, not just to obtain a particular academic qualification or not purely for their eventual employability outcome...we have a unique opportunity I think to influence people's development socially in a whole range of ways...a key responsibility to bring in those broader aspects of education around equality and diversity generally and around behaviours, absolutely, and I think we can begin to see some cultural shifts over time....we have a responsibility to do so.' (Participant 8, Student Support Staff)

The last participant raises an important point about the importance of educating for life. Within this framework, evidence-based bystander interventions can be embedded within curricula to reach those who potentially do not see SV as their issue. Understanding that we all have a role in

combatting SV at university and beyond speaks to creating a culture beyond university that is intolerant of it.

There is also a broader discussion about whether the UUK (2016) recommendations should be made compulsory for universities to implement which we return to in chapter 5. Six participants also highlight the fears of others in their institution about the risk that some of the content of prevention activities could upset students, particularly those who are considered 'vulnerable'. This suggests that there is still work to be done within some universities to convince 'the institution' and its staff that SV is an issue that should be addressed by them.

Key Points

- Universities are undertaking a range of prevention activities.
- *The Intervention Initiative* is the most often reported intervention utilised, followed closely by sexual consent interventions.
- Of those who have adopted *The Intervention Initiative* many have adapted it to make it shorter or include other material.
- Universities are seen as responsible for educating citizens for life rather than having only a narrow focus on academic qualifications.
- Many want to embed bystander-type initiatives into the curriculum
- Delivery of prevention programmes often rely on volunteers from within the staff body and/or sometimes students willing to be trained which can lead to concerns about sustainability.
- A key concern about prevention activities remaining voluntary is the gender bias identified by participants in those who attend, i.e. that it is female students who are more likely to attend.

Chapter 2 – Prevention - Recommendations

3. UUK should develop a clear working definition of what constitutes 'evidence-based' approaches for universities to use in order to better evaluate their prevention activities and provide examples of good practice.
4. Universities should use evidence-based interventions for prevention activities and evaluate their impact.
5. Universities should embed and integrate evidence-based prevention into the curricula
6. The OfS must require embedded evidence-based prevention as part of the conditions for registration in order to ensure consistency across the sector.

3. Policy and Strategy

Policies signal how an individual university defines, understands and intends to respond to the issue of SV, both within the institution and to the outside world. Policies may therefore be important indicators of institutional intent and senior management engagement with the issue, as well as first steps in the process of change.



The importance of policy development is identified by this participant:

‘Well, if there isn’t a clear policy outlining that, then students will not be able to see that the university considers that a problem. So, at the very starting point, you need to have a clearly outlined policy that recognises this issue as a harm.’ (Participant 6, Academic Staff)

Other interview participants explain the time commitment needed to persuade universities to review existing policies and develop better tailored policies for sexual violence/harassment:

‘... [we] spent about two years putting together the policy and prevention... which took a lot of time to get that written, approved, and get input and everything.’ (Participant 22, Student Support Staff)

Some interview participants describe recently updating or being in the process of updating their policies to include more in terms of domestic and sexual violence within intimate partner relationships. However, whilst seven interview respondents describe their current policy as effective, seventeen described their policy as ineffective. This is perhaps not surprising given that most participants place their institutions as at the beginning in the process of implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations.

‘...no, I don’t think it’s effective and so we are reviewing it this year. Well now, actually, because we’ve got a draft floating around...by focusing in on this one area, around sexual violence, harassment, it’s really clear that that probably is not specific enough, it doesn’t really help. So, it’s probably escalated it forward, but we needed to review it anyway.’ (Participant 3, Student Support Staff)

Thirteen interview participants explain that their institution does not have a dedicated policy for

SV. Instead, issues were addressed in other university policies such as disciplinary policies, harassment, bullying or dignity at work policies.

The introduction of a specific policy is not always seen as desirable due to the perceived negative impact of increasing the numbers of policies, and also because of the absence of other specific policies for issues such as homophobia or other forms of hate crime.

Some respondents describe that their universities have responded by producing a specific *statement* addressing the unacceptability of sexual violence whereas others maintain the need for a specific *policy* to underline the importance of the issue. However, having policies in place did not mean that they are necessarily implemented in practice, nor fit for purpose. Eight interview participants discuss such problems in their institutions. For example, the following interviewee talks about the difficulties of getting new policy adopted, and about making the case for new and better tailored policy:

‘We have written a sexual violence and harassment policy and accompanying discipline [sic] procedure, basically setting out that we have zero tolerance on the matter, but it has yet to actually be properly implemented... one of the challenges is at the moment, the policy board thinks that the ones in place are very effective and very good and that perhaps we do not need another policy; we just need to amend the current ones... by having another policy, it highlights the fact that this is a really important issue that we need to take specific and special attention and care for.’ (Participant 1, Student Support Staff)

One participant outlines an example where an incident had taken place and a specific policy had not been implemented properly - and it was therefore handled inappropriately:

‘...a policy is only as good as the people that implement it and the system in which it’s implemented... the staff/student relationships policy wasn’t there but there was a number of other relevant policies they could have used but they just weren’t followed.’ (Participant 4, Academic Staff)

Generally, the same policies and procedures are seen to apply to both staff and students. However, in a small number of instances, it was pointed out that policies and procedures are sometimes more robust when it comes to student-to-student relations. It is believed by some that more could be done regarding allegations of SV perpetrated by staff towards students. This

is also supported by recent literature in the field (see Bull & Rye, 2018).

‘...we did have guidelines about bullying and harassment and those were then updated as part of the project...that included updated information about how to report...however...we do not currently have a very clear and robust policy about staff/student relationships, about sexual violence in particular. There is a piece of work going on at the moment...that’s looking more at staff behaviours and codes of conduct and professional behaviours but...hasn’t yet been approved for publication.’ (Participant 18, Student Support Staff)

Furthermore, one interview participant describes a personal experience where she had not been provided with timely support for historical SV as a member of staff:

‘...there is actually not a lot of capacity in the universities, so I think that’s something that will need to change on a larger scale... I have experienced sexual harassment and assault in my past, I went into the wellbeing office and asked if there was a way I could get some sort of ongoing counselling for that, and those options are not really existing for things that are not immediate...’ (Participant 22, Support Staff)

Gaps in policy are identified in terms of the need for there to be distinct actions for the range of SV that might take place and where staff are the alleged perpetrators towards students. Another gap identified less often is how to support or work with the accused, for example:

‘We also have a protocol for dealing with the accused, so the people who are accused of sexual assault, as a student. Before any outcome is determined we have a responsibility to both parties. But I think we are still struggling and grappling with what it means to investigate or work alongside the police to investigate sexual harassment and how that translates into action that the university can take.’ (Participant 2, Student Support)

Key Points

- Many institutions do not have a specific SV policy and more generic policies on bullying were cited as inappropriate for SV.
- SV policies are, in practice, often of variable effectiveness.
- Policies appear to be less developed in cases of student SV allegations against staff and of sexual harassment
- Varying levels of awareness and understanding about SV and its impacts for students and staff underpin different and diverse institutional responses.

- Staff need more confidence to manage allegations of SV including how to address alleged student and staff perpetrators of SV.

Chapter 3 - Policy and Strategy - Recommendations

7. UUK should provide a best practice template for a sexual violence and harassment policy which includes disciplinary procedures with key non-negotiables, and which can be minimally tailored to suit each university's unique institutional context. This should address both student - student and staff – student allegations; and provide guidance on how alleged perpetrators should be addressed.
8. UUK should provide best practice templates for codes of conduct for students and staff which explicitly address sexual violence and harassment.
9. Universities must adopt a policy and codes of conduct based on the templates and ensure clear ownership within governance processes for monitoring implementation.
10. The OfS must require the adoption and implementation of a policy and code of conduct based on the templates as part of the conditions of registration and should develop audit measures to robustly monitor implementation and effectiveness of these in order to ensure consistency across the sector.

4. Reporting and Response

A key recommendation of the UUK (2016) report is that universities should provide effective responses to those impacted by sexual violence/harassment. Such responses are, typically, outlined in institutional policies so discussion of each is often inextricably linked. We have separated them so that in the previous chapter there is a focus on policy development and in this chapter there is a focus on the range of responses provided by universities.

Responses, especially first responses, to reporting SV can directly impact a student's wellbeing including their ability to access education (Stenning, Mitra-Kahn and Gunby, 2012; CUSU, 2014). Improving first responses can therefore be seen as an indicator that students might be more likely to report to their institution. Eight interview participants explain that, as a result of their institutions' activities in support of the UUK (2016) recommendations, there has been an increase in reporting of sexual violence.

Whilst prevention activities are usually aimed at students, response activities are usually expected by the institution, such as disclosure training aimed at staff to increase confidence in responding positively to disclosures of SV.

Responding to Student Allegations

Many universities are taking steps to enable an effective response to deal with student allegations of SV. Survey respondents talk about a range of responses including: the Violence Reduction Unit approach (Police Scotland); a disclosure training programme run by local rape crisis services; the introduction of specialist SV officers; anonymous online chat materials; and



developing a network of Respect³ contacts for staff and students.

Interview participants also describe a range of disclosure training courses available to staff to respond which usually vary according to

³ Respect is an England and Wales organisation that promotes work to address domestic violence perpetration and male victimisation: <https://www.respect.uk.net/pages/6-about-us>

staff roles i.e. staff in pastoral or welfare support roles would undertake more enhanced training. Five interview participants have accessed training from Lime Culture.

Interview participants are not always sure whether there is an effective response to reported SV at their university. Taking the interview data as a whole, university responses could be described as varied and improving, however, the need for further development is also identified. Improvements centre on appropriate support and investigation training, timeliness of communication and the investigatory process, managing informal complaints, communicating realistic expectations, and exploring the possibility of restorative justice, for example:

'...there is an improving response...when I see cases that are ending in really dissatisfying outcomes for all parties involved, or cases that are incredibly delayed and the delay is on the behalf of the university, and I see students on either side of the fence, the impact that the investigation has on them, it's really difficult to call it effective. I think it's much better than it was. We used to call... someone would say, "So-and-so raped me," and our response was, "Well we called the police for you."' (Participant 13, Student Support Staff)

'So, I think we do have a good system in that sense in that Wellbeing will contact them and they will be offered support. What form that support takes; I don't know. There were suggestions that we needed more trained staff, counselling specialised staff for these kind of issues within Wellbeing. I'm not sure how much that's been taken up. I suspect not enough to keep up with demand. So, I think there's some adequacy in terms of there's a sense of actually caring for the victim.' (Participant 10, Academic)

'I have a flowchart of what's going to happen next that I can hand to students and say, "Okay, this is where we are in the flowchart, this is where we're going, this is what happens next," and I can show them a step-by-step version of what happens. I can't tell them, always, how long it's going to take to get to that and... Because we use multiple investigators, we don't have a set... We don't have just two investigators that run cases, we have lots of investigators who do this on top of their day job and it's not part of their workload, which is a huge issue. It means that we get... I don't think we have investigations that are all done at the same standard and level.' (Participant 13, Student Support)

The latter participant makes an important point about resourcing and workloads for investigators and the potential for differing standards of investigation within an institution. This speaks to the importance of thorough and consistent implementation of policy which itself relies in large part

on having sufficient resources. Those who are more confident in their institution's response described a robust reporting system and immediate support provision that had been in place for some time.

Effective responses are considered to be accessible, more formalised, co-ordinated, consistent and reactive. At least two participants identify the importance of clearly trained staff who can respond out of hours.

'We are very quick to respond to any student concerns. We've got a number of ways students can report...they can email, they can call, they can pop into the office and they are triaged straightaway. Out of hours...our response is very effective, it's very timely and its very student orientated.' (Participant 11, Student Support Staff)

'...we have a really robust system for students...an online disclosing tool...if students do make an identified disclosure, they are immediately contacted by a member of the disclosure response team...we talk through all of the different options of support available...empower them to make the decision that is right for them, we facilitate next steps so that it is easy to access other forms of support if required. Out of all the students that we surveyed and asked for feedback after appointments, 100% of them have said that they found the service useful and that they felt it gave them the confidence to know what the next steps were and how to progress forward after what had happened.' (Participant 16, Student Support Staff)

As may be apparent, the institutional response is most often discussed in terms of the victim who is most frequently described as a student. However, support for the alleged perpetrator is also discussed by some interview participants, with seven suggesting it can be difficult to investigate and know what actions to take where the accused is a fellow student.

'On a couple of occasions, the alleged perpetrator has asked me to communicate with their family and talk them through the processes of how we look after them and make sure they're safe while they're here and everything else. We get really good feedback from the people who have gone through the experience.' (Participant 20, Student Support Staff)

'There seems to have been much more of a focus on improving the response to students who have disclosed or come forward...That seems like a safe thing to do. There is a bit more difficulty around the alleged perpetrators. Interestingly, that was the only thing that didn't really come to the steering group, the consultation. They got external legal advice. So, that made a few of us wonder, 'Is this steering group just about victims, or is it about

the actual issue [of] sexual violence?’ (Participant 19, Academic Staff)

Six interview participants also identify a need for national guidance for universities:

‘I think there then needs to be some braver guidance for the sector about what role universities can play in investigating and bringing disciplinary sanctions against those that are accused of sexual violence and sexual assault. I feel quite strongly about that, and I think there is a role for universities to play and I don’t think they’re playing it because either they don’t want to and they’re using the historic guidance as a shield to do that, or they just feel that they can’t do it because there’s nothing specific in any of the national guidance that says they should be doing this.’ (Participant 12, Student Support Staff)

We return to this in chapter 5 on accountability.

University Remit and Responsibility

Interview participants are clear that if a student⁴ is subject to SV outside the university then this is still a university responsibility. Indeed, many referred to it as an obligation. This includes where the perpetrator may be unconnected to the university or where the SV can be considered historic.

Some participants are concerned that where there are no specific policies on SV, perpetrators will be investigated using more general behaviour-related disciplinary processes such as for bullying which are inappropriate.

Participants recognise that the level of involvement might differ according to where and when the incident takes place and any other existing support available. For example, if it happened during vacation and away from the university the student might receive primary support from their local service instead and the university would

supplement that support. If a student experiences SV from another student an investigation can take place and disciplinary procedures against the perpetrator can be used where necessary.

‘The support provision will always be there. Some of our disclosures were about historical abuse, some were about incidents that took place where the perpetrator wasn’t another student and those reporting students will always be able to access support...’ (Participant 9, Student Support Staff)

‘The support would be provided to the student regardless of where the abuse happened,

⁴ Very often interview participants referred to students but in two cases we were informed that this also applied to staff members, visitors or contract workers.

whether it be online, a different country. As long as they are a current student, we will provide them with support. In terms of the complaints procedure that only applies to student on student violence, but it would still investigate a case of student on student violence whether that happened on campus or off campus.' (Participant 16, Student Support Staff)

It is important to note that support will typically end when the student leaves university which highlights the requirement for partnership working with external agencies to work together in the best interests of the student (discussed later in the report).

In contrast, some participants explained that if a student is accused of SV outside of the university there are few processes in place by which the university can obtain knowledge of this, and participants assumed that it would only become known if there was a resulting conviction. One participant explains that if a student is convicted then university disciplinary procedures will be followed, even if the victim is not a fellow student or staff member, because the perpetrator/offender would pose a potential risk to the university community. This raises the issue of whether and how data sharing protocols based on risk assessment can be developed with police and other agencies.

Barriers to Effective Responses

For universities to respond appropriately, students first have to report. Interview participants say that barriers exist to students reporting their experiences of SV, including: the stigma around SV; students neither realising it is a university responsibility to provide support nor expecting support to be available; not wanting to report it to the university; and fears around confidentiality. Campaigns and online reporting systems are believed to help improve reporting. One interview participant specifically mentions the problem of LGBT+ and post-graduate student groups in under-reporting. Post-graduate students are particularly at risk of staff misconduct (NUS & 1752 Group, 2018). There is little mention of other minority groups, which is interesting given the increasing numbers of international students at UK universities (Universities UK International, 2019).

One participant highlights a practical obstacle of insufficient private space to discuss SV with students which raises issues of privacy and confidentiality. Barriers to reporting also include the quality of processes for communicating information about reporting systems and providing disclosure training to all front-facing staff in large institutions and the non-mandatory nature of training, as well as the reluctance of staff to include responding to sexual violence/harassment in their role:

'I think that there definitely are barriers to students reporting. We have managed to create a central reporting system but communicating to the key and front-facing staff has proved quite an issue... getting lecturers together is like herding cats...hard to get a message and workshop across to all the parts of the university.' (Participant 1, Student Support Staff)

'They want the [staff] to take ownership over everything, and at the minute, the [staff] acts on behalf of both the victim and the suspect, which we're a bit concerned about. Not all of our [staff] seem to be very comfortable with this role that's been bestowed upon them. So, we were discussing about, how can we address this? The university has got a duty of care, in many respects to both parties, but also, it's very easy to just take a procedural line...I think that's one of our key concerns at the minute, about how the response to individual cases is being managed, and it's not necessarily the best way.' (Participant 19, Academic Staff)

On the other hand, problems are described whereby well-meaning members of staff hold a lot of responsibility for disclosures received but they are not necessarily skilled to provide support. This can affect boundaries but could also have negative impact for those members of staff as a result of vicarious trauma (Ghahramanlou & Brodbeck, 2000).

Finally, some participants believe that there might be unrealistic expectations within institutions about what reporting figures communicate. In one instance an interview participant describes their institution reducing barriers to reporting which resulted in an increase in reporting. Senior management were disappointed, stating they had hoped to see a decrease in reporting which suggests a lack of understanding about what encouraging reporting can lead to. Other participants also point to the need for increased reporting to be understood as indicating increased confidence by students to come forward.

Key Points

- Most institutions intend to improve their response systems for students experiencing SV; and anonymous online reporting systems are a favoured method for doing so.
- Concerns are raised about there being a gap between having policy statements about responses and consistent enactment of that policy in practice: training and resources are highlighted as crucial in ensuring policy is enacted effectively.
- Where reporting systems work, student feedback is often very positive.
- HEIs responses depend on students reporting and several barriers are identified that might prevent them from doing so. Building trust is seen as key to ensuring that students will report.
- As well as encouraging students to see universities as a safe place to report to about experiences of SV, participants also point to the need to ensure staff are trained and supported to receive disclosures.
- Senior management require increased knowledge and understanding of the relationship between reporting and prevalence of sexual violence/harassment.
- Some participants are concerned about how universities should support students who are alleged perpetrators of SV.

Chapter 4 - Reporting and Response - Recommendations

11. UUK should provide a best practice specialist-informed template on how to encourage safe and supportive reporting, which is the cornerstone for all effective responses.

12. Resource must be invested by universities in training staff for support roles and investigative or other procedural roles. Training should be delivered by specialists working in the field of SV.

13. Universities must continuously publicise and enhance the visibility of their reporting processes and support mechanisms to build confidence and trust to report and access support

14. The OfS must require the adoption of safe and supportive reporting and staff training as part of the conditions of registration to ensure consistency across the sector.

5. Accountability of Universities

The UUK (2016) report provides recommendations rather than requirements for HEIs to address SV. Currently, there are no obligations on universities to implement the recommendations. In this study, we explored what participants thought about accountability of HEIs with respect to preventing and responding to SV.



Making prevention mandatory

The majority of interview participants (16 out of 25) believe that prevention activities can and/or should be embedded in the curriculum.

‘I would love the education within the curriculum to be mandatory because that is something that we have had a massive issue with over the past year in terms of getting that embedded.’ (Participant 5, Student Support Staff)

For these participants, it is a combination of a lack of will and lack of resources that prevents this being the case. There are some concerns that a lack of resource will lead to prevention activities being shortened or being provided online only, which, many participants believe, will reduce both

Embedding activities in the curriculum relies on sustained resources (e.g. sufficient numbers of facilitators to deliver to large numbers of students).

their significance and impact. Interview participants also believe that embedding prevention activities in the curriculum could deal with the potential difficulties involved in delivering to some audiences such as in Maths, Science and Engineering.

‘There are a few courses that [we] would like to implement...but there would need to be an ongoing legacy of that, i.e., the university putting money in to encourage participants...if we could make that mandatory in courses just for one module. It is not a huge amount. It would be like a three-week, four-week project within these courses. I think that would be a great and really positive curriculum change.’ (Participant 1, Student Support Staff)

‘The initial idea was to think about embedding it in different academic subjects, so the computer sciences could think about misogyny in video games and different schools could think of how they might incorporate it...for our school...We have a whole module on

gender and violence...it may be harder for science students...in an ideal world, it would be embedded in the curriculum across the university.' (Participant 6, Academic Staff)

Four interview participants cite a divide they perceive between academic and support staff as a potential barrier to embedding SV prevention within the curriculum. This is articulated as being in terms of ownership of the work, workload tensions or communications.

Seven participants can be described as being more ambivalent about whether prevention activities should be embedded within the curriculum or not. One participant expressed concerns about breeding resentment among students (and staff) about being forced to take part in training that is not seen as relevant to their degree programme; and another wanted the work on SV to be seen as 'best practice' rather than 'enforced'. Others were just unsure about how it would work.

'I'm not sure about that. I think I would have to see how those proposals might play out. As I say, I think we absolutely have a duty and a commitment to supporting students in a pastoral sense, so looking after their health and wellbeing and making sure that they are as far as possible safe and able to go about their roles. ... I think it's probably always better to try a non-legal option in the first instance and allow universities... But I think that as soon as you start making things mandatory, particularly in the area that involves consent, it becomes ethically debatable anyway. But having said that, I think that this issue is so prevalent through society that something needs to be done.' (Participant 12, Student Support Staff)

The question of whether other issues such as mental health, substance misuse, homophobia, disability, hate crime or racism should also be covered in the curriculum is identified within these discussions since these are seen as of equal importance to SV. Some participants are unsure that SV should be 'singled out' or that violence and abuse should be addressed within what they see as a narrowly defined way focusing only on SV. Others are concerned about the difficulties of keeping SV on the agenda due to so many other competing priorities such as those outlined above. Interestingly, a participant suggested one potential way to overcome some of the obstacles by universities providing a core module on personal, social, health and economic education (PHSE):

'...maybe we need some kind of PSHE core module in all universities for all students but if

we have something like that then it better bloody well be fun because otherwise people aren't going to take it seriously. Do you know what I mean?' (Participant 4, Academic Staff)

The importance of support from government, from OfS, and from UUK, is believed by some to be needed to allow universities to tackle this in an 'upfront way'. In addition, there is recognition that to achieve the culture change called for by the UUK (2016) report, investment from the government, the OfS and universities has to be long term; and that universities need to recognise the importance of the issues and really commit to what is necessary to change the culture:

'...efforts have been made and people have made genuine efforts to do something and to respond to the call to change things. What I do not know, and where it is more difficult to comment, is how effective those interventions are going to be over the long term and over the medium term because this whole thing, which has been referenced more than once today, is about changing a culture and changing culture takes time. It is not something that you can do overnight. It requires consistent and cohesive effort to change culture and attitude and behaviours, so it is something that we are going to have to keep at...' (Participant 2, Student Support Staff)

'I haven't been working in higher education that long, probably about five years, but I've seen massive strides I think across the sector and I think that's to do with the global climate. Of course, you could always do more, but I think there seems to be a lot of momentum and it seems to be escalating each year and I think universities are... they all seem to know their obligations and are willing to do more.' (Participant 18, Student Support Staff)

'I would like to say yes. I think the HEFCE funding and the UUK report and the Pinsent Mason guidelines really do push universities and I think that sixty-two universities got the HEFCE funding, which shows that they are doing something and it is in their mind-set to address the issues, but I know here at this university, I do not feel like we are doing enough and I know that I am not the only one who thinks that. I think that we can do far more and that we are not working hard enough to address what is really a human rights issue. It is violence against girls. It is a sexism issue. I do not think we are doing enough.' (Participant 1, Student Support Staff)

Responses across the sector vary considerably with some universities making more significant efforts than others and a significant minority are disappointed in their university's responses. Participants suggest that more awareness raising about SV, more publishing of university statistics about SV reporting, as well as a genuine commitment to discussing SV openly are needed to convince universities of the seriousness of the issues and the need to engage with the UUK (2016) recommendations.

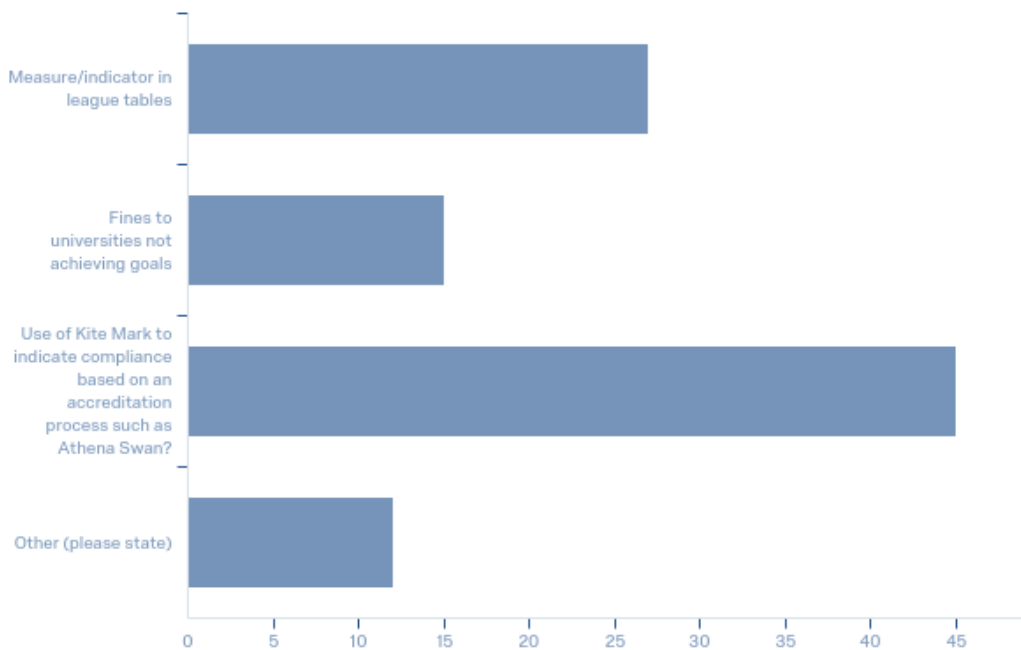
It is recognised that cultural change will take more persistent effort and whilst there have been short term efforts via Catalyst funding there is uncertainty about continued efforts in the medium and long term.

Making universities accountable

Survey respondents were asked whether they thought it important that universities should be accountable for their delivery of the UUK (2016) agenda and, overwhelmingly (94%, n=65), respondents said that it is definitely (64%, n=44) or probably (30%, n=21) important.

Survey respondents were then asked to indicate from a list of options, which they believed would make universities accountable. Figure 5.1 provides the 99 responses received from 62 (46% of total) survey respondents. A kite mark to indicate compliance based on accreditation is the most favoured option (45%, n=45), followed by a measure in league tables (27%, n=27). Four interview participants suggest the use of a kite mark such as Athena Swan. There is least support for fines on universities (15%, n=15) which echoes the fears of respondents that universities are being put under pressure to deliver culture change with little extra resource to do so sustainably.

Figure 5.1 Numbers Indicating Preference for Options To Evidence Accountability of Universities in Addressing UUK (2016) Recommendations



Some respondents voice their concerns over kite marks or league tables, for reasons including the lack of substance and culture of dishonesty fostered by each and the danger of tick-box exercises, for example:

‘I don't think that any of the above will be meaningful in the long-term. We need measures which are evidence based and demonstrate the impact of measures taken on the student experience. This will include reported data but must be evaluative. The risk with other approaches is that they become a tick box audit exercise and where a ranking may become the end point rather than the substance - people then game the system and the metrics become dilute. How do we best measure what is a cultural and behavioural change? Over time and using research-based methods.’ (Survey respondent)

Others, however, note problems with existing systems:

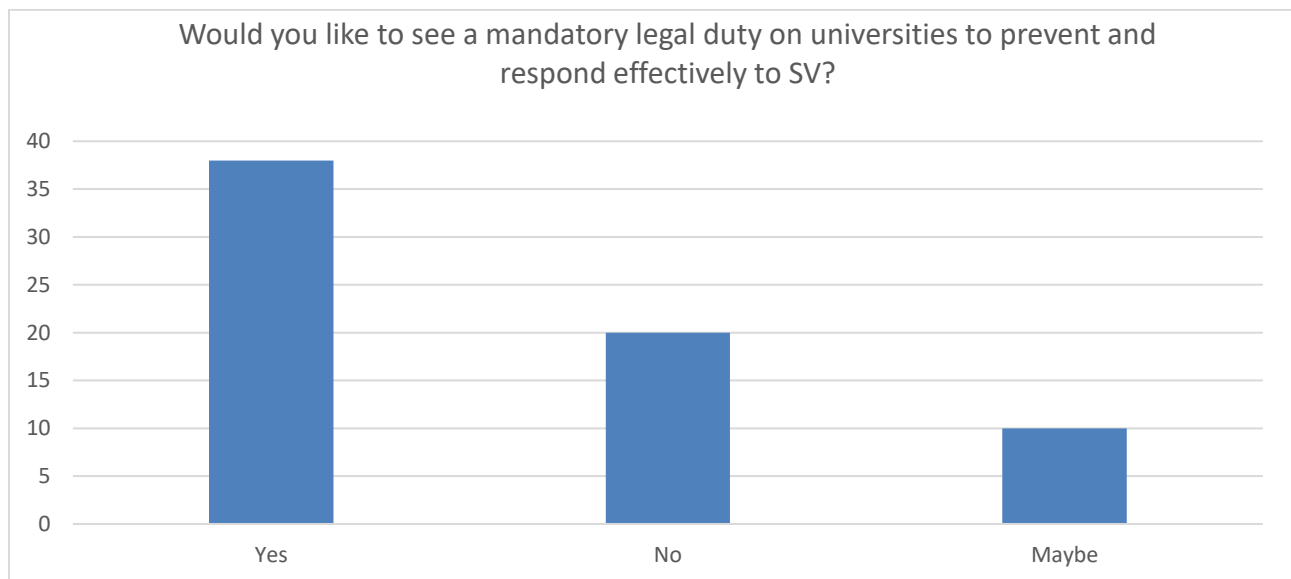
‘The opportunity to create 3- or 5-year plans with the UUK or the grant organization (HEFCE) so that each university can create realistic, attainable, and benchmark-oriented goals. The league tables in the charity sector only tend to encourage lying, falsifying of documents, and media-centred ‘progress’ which actually tends to inhibit rather than encourage change in practical ways. Having a centralized database of campaign tools, information, and resources which could be accessed by member institutions is a far better resource and benchmark option than league tabling if the goal is genuine collaborative change.’ (Survey respondent)

The desirability of a mandatory duty

Survey respondents were then asked if they would like to see a mandatory legal duty on universities to prevent and respond effectively to SV. As Graph 4.1 indicates, of a total of 68 (51% of the total) survey respondents who completed this question, over half (56%, n=38) said yes, they want to see a mandatory legal duty on universities to prevent and respond effectively to SV, with another 29% (n=20) saying maybe. Only 15% (n=10) did not want a legal duty.



Graph 5.1: Indicating Opinions about a Mandatory Legal Duty for Universities to Address Sexual Violence/Harassment



Of these respondents, 21 went on to explain their answer using a free text box. The main argument in favour of a mandatory legal duty related to achieving consistency across the sector in light of the concerns raised by some respondents about, as one survey respondent says, the **'extremely disparate treatment of women'** between different universities and variable senior management responses.

'[U]niversities will only truly act when they have to. At the moment it's still a tick-box, a 'moment' thing - it's not deeply ingrained in the way universities do business and the VAW agenda is superseded by the next concern - e.g. mental health - without joining up the dots that they are all related.' (Survey respondent)

'Too many universities see VAW as not happening here and are too concerned about reputational damage.' (Survey respondent)

'I think this is the only way that universities in the current context will take SV/GBV seriously.' (Survey respondent)

'There is still a hesitation by a number of senior staff to meaningfully respond to SV as its 'difficult' or 'uncomfortable'. However, this could be worked around if there was a mandatory legal duty, in such a way as to enforce a duty of care to our students.' (Survey respondent)

Those in favour of a legal duty think that it will help prioritise gender-based violence and keep it on the agenda, emphasise the importance of the issue, and send an important message to survivors that their experiences and wellbeing are taken seriously, both within university settings and wider society. Some survey respondents comment that a legal duty will help universities, for example, in the 'development of actions and responses to reduce the challenge' and to 'be more respons[ive] and devote more resources to ensuring that SV is properly dealt with in a student-centred way'.

The main themes that arose from those who answered 'maybe' to the question about a legal duty was the need for further details and information about what a legal duty would look like including arguments for and against, as well as evidence from other jurisdictions.

Only one participant explains their answer for not wanting to see a legal duty:

'The USA has a mandatory legal framework therefore can do the bare minimum and has to follow a standardized regulation. Not having that in the UK means Uni's can (theoretically) address the issue in ways that best draw on their resources and resonates with their student demographic. This flexibility may mean a better outcome for students but might be difficult to 'measure'. (Survey respondent)

Interview participants were also asked their views on mandatory legal obligations for universities

and the majority (n=18) are in favour. Four are unsure and only two are opposed. Participants provided multiple but common reasons in favour of a mandatory duty. These have been broken down below and key reasons include:

- Universities have to be made to recognise the problem and take action (n=11).
- It would send a message about universities taking it seriously and demonstrate a commitment to addressing gender-based violence (n=10).
- Universities will not take the agenda seriously without it (n=9).
- Students and staff have a right to a working and learning environment that they feel safe in (n=6).
- It can be used to offset fears about reputational damage i.e. all universities are doing it (n=4).

'I think definitely there should be a mandatory obligation. It is in the human rights to live and work in an environment that is free from harassment and that is safe, so the very fact that sexual assaults and harassment and rape goes up in the first week of term, during Fresher's Week, just shows that actually, it should be a legal requirement for universities to address such issues and it should come from the government and then from the top of the university, there should be one person who is in charge of addressing that agenda. Absolutely'. (Participant 1, Student Support Staff)

'I think it might, just because, if it was mandatory, that's when it falls from almost a campaign into something that legally has to be done. I think saying something has to be done, it must be done; if you say that to a senior member of staff, they know it is required, it is not something that is just an add-on. So, yes, I think making it mandatory is a good idea'. (Participant 17, Student Support Staff)

Half of interview participants (n=9) who are in favour of a duty describe feeling hesitant about making it mandatory but explain that there is little alternative. Reasons are similar to those given by survey respondents: that it might become a bureaucratic tick-box exercise or a legal minimum rather than a commitment to culture change. However, these respondents nonetheless acknowledge that a duty allows an acceptable reason for doing it ('we have to') for those universities worried about reputational damage; and prevents any individual university senior management being able to block developments. For example:

'I think that's a really interesting question because we see that in the States...that's a really huge motivator to do it, because if you don't do it, or you do it poorly, you can lose part of your federal funding...universities that wouldn't normally do it will do it. Or, universities that want to put their head in the sand and say, "We don't have a problem

here, that's not us, that's [A] and [B] and [C], they're the ones with problems," I think it gives them an excuse to say, "Oh well we don't have a problem here, but we're required to do this," so it gives a different 'in' for the different universities [sic] who might not be doing the work.' (Participant 10, Student Support Staff)

'I'm against bureaucracy for bureaucracy's sake but I also think that this is such a political issue. If you have some people in senior management who are sceptical or who are not supportive or who have been drawn into the backlash against the Me Too campaign, then the staff who are trying to move this work forward are going to really, really struggle. So, part of me thinks added bureaucracy isn't the answer but part of me thinks actually this issue is wildly prevalent, wildly underreported, it's a major issue. Particularly it's a gendered issue and we need to be responding across the sector in robust ways, and if the only way to achieve that is through some sort of mandatory requirements then so be it, I think probably'. (Participant 9, Student Support Staff)

Again, uncertainties centre on the best way of achieving cultural change. Participants want universities to see this as something they *should* be doing rather than something which they are mandated to do, and which will consequently be completed in a tokenistic or 'tick box' manner. However, it is significant that the majority of our participants believe there is little alternative to imposing duties.

Both interview participants who were opposed to mandatory legal obligations were Student Support Staff. One advocates the need for a supportive approach to achieve a culture shift whereas the other participant is concerned that universities are not equipped and are being put in a position by the government to provide services that have been cut in the statutory and third sectors:

'I do not think taking a legal approach to this is terribly fair... already been some evaluation with what universities have done with changing the culture. I think following up to see who has done what with the guidance and sharing best practice...holding universities to account not in a heavy duty way, but perhaps in a light touch self-assessment way is a good approach... we have got a lot of this in other areas of our work, safeguarding and prevent, for example, with the Office for Students...those reports and that process of reporting and reflection can be helpful to identifying gaps and then addressing them.' (Participant 2, Student Support Staff)

Demonstrating implementation

Survey respondents were presented with a list and asked to indicate which, if any, could be included as criteria for demonstrating implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations. Respondents could select multiple criteria and 241 responses were received from 66 (49% of total) respondents. Table 4.1, below, indicates that the most common answer is for responsibility for implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations to be included in the role profile of university senior executives (23%, n=55). This is followed by regular ‘climate’ surveys of students’ experiences (20%, n=48), mandatory central reporting of student reports of experiences of SV (17%, 41) and SV as a standing item on Academic Board and Board of Governors’ Agenda (16%, 38).

Notably, *there is a significant statistical difference* between pre-1992 universities (36.8%) and post-1992 universities (61.4%) regarding regular ‘climate’ surveys of students’ experiences as criteria for demonstrating implementation. Survey respondents from post-1992 are *significantly more likely* to select this for inclusion, $F(1,n=101)=5.987, p=.012$.

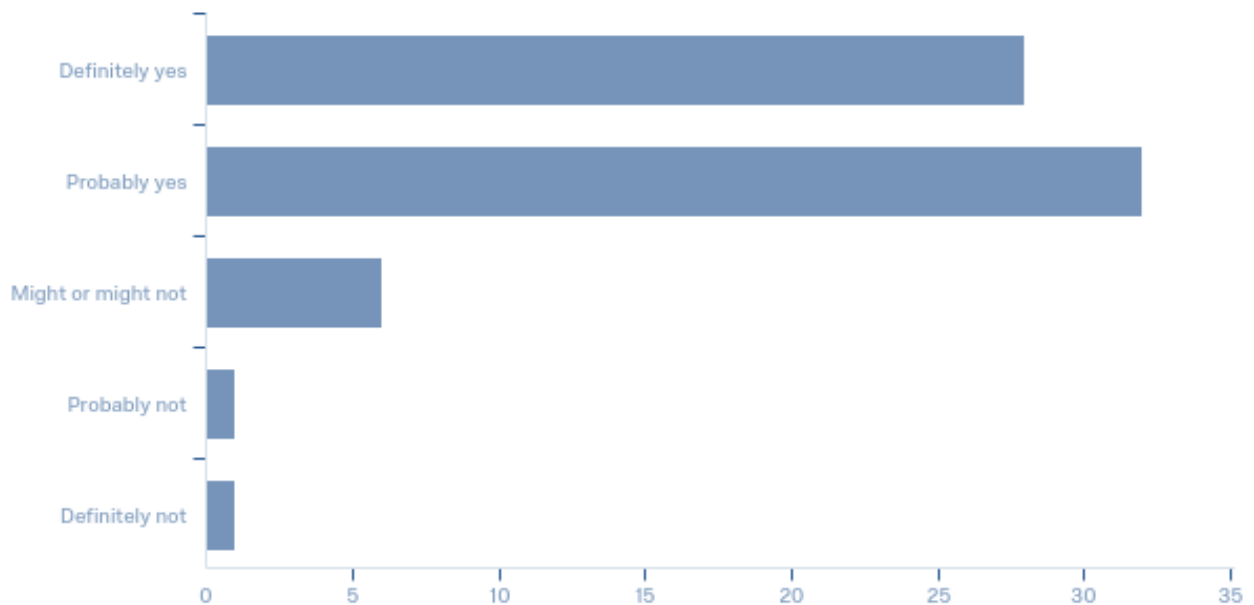
Table 5.1: Potential Criteria for Gauging Universities’ Implementation of the UUK (2016) Recommendations

Potential Criterion for Gauging Universities’ Implementation of the UUK (2016) Recommendations	Number of Respondents (%)
Responsibility for UUK SV Agenda in role profile of senior exec of university	55 (23%)
Regular ‘climate’ surveys of students’ experiences (whether formally reported or not)	48 (20%)
Mandatory central reporting of student reports of experiences of SV	41 (17%)
SV as a standing item on Academic Board and Board of Governors Agenda	38 (16%)
Resourcing interventions such as <i>The Intervention Initiative</i> (PHE/UWE model) which have been modified and evaluated for effectiveness	33 (14%)
Resourcing interventions such as <i>The Intervention Initiative</i> (PHE/UWE model) substantially in its original form (including updates): delivered over time and face to face	16 (7%)
Other	10 (4%)
Total	241 (100%)

Accountability of the Office for Students (OfS)

Survey respondents were asked if it was important that the OfS be accountable to government for their delivery of the UUK (2016) recommendations. As Figure 5.2 indicates, the vast majority either agreed definitely (41%, n=28) or probably (47%, n=32) that it is important that OfS should be accountable to government. The obvious enthusiasm for greater accountability and regulation on the part of those working in this area speaks to the necessity for more decisive leadership from the OfS.

Figure 5.2: Should the OfS Be Accountable to the Government for their Delivery of the UUK (2016) Recommendations



Key Points

- The majority of interview respondents believe that prevention activities should be made mandatory by being embedded in the curriculum.
- Under a third are more ambivalent about this, worried that forcing students to engage will not achieve the wider aims to change culture.
- Regardless of whether respondents are in favour or not, they also raise the issue about the need for extra resources to embed prevention in the curriculum.

- Many think support and investment by UUK, OfS and government to achieve cultural change in the long term is required.
- The overwhelming majority of respondents believe that universities should be accountable for their implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations.
- A large proportion of survey respondents see advantages to a mandatory legal duty on universities to prevent and respond to SV.
- Survey respondents in favour of a duty think that it would help to emphasise the importance of the issue, reduce fears about reputational damage and improve resourcing.
- Even survey respondents who are not enthusiastic about legal duties cannot think of any alternative to their use to bring about change.
- Very few respondents reject the use of a mandatory duty.
- The use of a kite mark to indicate compliance based on accreditation and measures in league tables are most favoured. There is little support for fines on universities.
- The most popular options chosen to demonstrate implementation of the UUK SV recommendations are responsibility for the work to be included in the role profile of university senior executives, regular 'climate' surveys of students' experiences and mandatory central reporting of student reports of SV.
- Survey respondents overwhelmingly support the suggestion that the OfS be accountable to government for their delivery of the UUK (2016) recommendations.

Chapter 5 - Accountability of Universities - Recommendations

C.f. Chapter 2 recommendation 5. Universities should embed and integrate evidence-based prevention into the curricula.

15. UUK should implement a kite mark system such as Athena SWAN as a way of rewarding compliance and best practice.

16. UUK and OfS should work with the compilers of league tables to include measures relating to the implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations.

17. OfS must include a measure of compliance into NSS survey.

18. Research into other jurisdictions must be commissioned to explore the best approaches for the mandatory implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations and the link between compliance and central government funding should be explicitly explored.

19. OfS must ensure the accountability of universities for the implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations through the conditions of registration.

20. UUK must provide a root and branch evaluation of the cost of 'culture change' and better guidance to the sector on what levels of resources are needed to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations.

21. OfS must explore methods to ensure consistency of funding across the sector for long-term sustainability

C.f. Chapter 8, recommendation 33. The OfS must make the sustainable allocation of funding by every university a condition of registration, for example by requiring the ringfencing of a proportion of fee income).

22. Government must now consider primary legislation to impose legal duties on universities to prevent and respond to sexual violence and harassment.

23. Government must ensure that the OfS is directly and transparently accountable for regulating universities' compliance in a uniform, consistent, and sustainably resourced way.

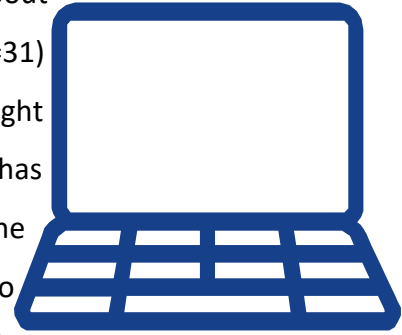
6. Research and Evaluation

Sexual violence in university settings is a relatively new field of research in the UK. It is crucial that the evidence base about the prevalence of SV in universities, as well as what works to prevent and respond to sexual violence on campus is developed through research and evaluation. Survey participants were, therefore, asked what research and evaluation of interventions take place within their institutions. Out of a sample of 72 respondents:

- 54% (n=39) report academic research staff working in the field are involved with research to inform the work of their institution in shaping their responses to the UUK (2016) recommendations.
- 22% (n=16) are unsure whether any research has is being conducted.
- 14% (n=10) report that academic research staff have not been involved.
- 10% (n=7) report that academic research staff have not yet been involved but will be.
- In a small number of cases external providers have been employed to undertake evaluation activities.

In the design of the question about this, the research team considered how to distinguish between different kinds of research and evaluation because of our concerns about the robustness of methodologies being adopted. 173 responses were received from 71 respondents about research and evaluation undertaken or planned to support progress in implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations. The most common tool reported is an online anonymous reporting tool for students experiencing SV (26% of total responses, n=45). In some cases, universities are using these as a statistical basis to measure the effectiveness of campaigns or awareness raising activities, for example, by evidencing that more students are subsequently reporting SV.

Survey results indicate that 20% (n=35) rely on feedback from respondents about interventions, which is a less robust evaluative methodology; and 18% (n=31) indicate they are conducting or have conducted a university-wide survey. Eight interview participants discuss the development of a campus-wide survey which has taken place or is about to take place. This is considered useful to gather baseline data of prevalence, attitudes and experiences which can be used as evidence to develop and direct prevention and intervention activities and responses at their institution.



‘Other’ is selected 19 times (11%) and includes focus groups or interviews with students, prevalence surveys, staff responses to interventions, the impact report of the Catalyst fund, feedback or evaluations following campaigns or events, and external case management evaluation. One survey respondent mentions the use of the Equally Safe in Higher Education approach. Four survey respondents say that no research has taken place and one explains that,

‘Although academics have been involved, their views and research have not necessarily been taken on board by senior management’.

Research to establish the effectiveness of specific interventions with pre and post intervention data is indicated as being adopted by 61 survey respondents with 30%, (n=18) indicating they have used this approach to evaluate bystander programmes. It may be that for some, Catalyst Funding provided an opportunity for this to take place.

Qualitative feedback gathered from interviews, focus groups, or in surveys/questionnaires (26%, n=13) is the next most popular research tool used. Focus groups are described by interview participants as useful for providing in-depth understanding about current experiences and how students want SV to be addressed at their university:

‘...research was surveys, focus groups, interview...primarily, looking at the students’ expectations of reporting and support mechanisms in response to sexual harassment or misconduct, so it looked at anything from, if you report something, what is it that you expect to happen next, what kind of sanctions do you think should be in place for student perpetrators, what kind of support would you expect if something had happened to you,

that kind of thing...that was really interesting to highlight the things that we do really well in terms of reporting and support but it also highlighted areas that we could improve. ... So that's given us a real good viewpoint moving forward kind of in response to the UUK report.' (Participant 11, Student Support Staff)

Follow up data collection in the medium/long term (e.g. at 3 and 6 months) is less common (15%, n=9), however, this seems essential to establish if the intervention achieves longer-term change. We also asked who was undertaking this research; 99 responses were provided by 70 survey respondents and it was apparent that this research is most likely to be undertaken by student services (33%, n=33) or academics (29%, n=29) whilst 17% (n=17) select 'other'. 'Other' includes HR, a student volunteer team, academics from personal interest, a specially appointed Pro-Vice Chancellor, another university, the intervention lead, the Student Union, a working group, students or graduate research interns, and a strategy and review manager.

There is a significant difference between academics in the institution who work in this field undertaking research and the type of university. Post-1992 universities are more likely to have academics involved in the research compared to pre-1992 universities (43.2% compared to 17.5%), $F(1, n=101)=7.97$, $p<.01$.

Five interview participants also explain that research activities have taken place prior to the UUK (2016) report and before institutions received any Catalyst funding indicating the fact that there have been previous attempts to raise awareness of the issues and a history of research and activism within the academy about Gender-Based violence (Donovan et al., 2020). At least two of these interview participants describe the historical context within which they conducted this research when SV at universities was not commonly discussed; and they reflected that since awareness and activity had increased, their experiences have become much more positive. However, at least six interview participants explain that there have been concerns raised in their universities about exposing students to content around SV by conducting research on the issues:

'...my very first project was thrown out...a small prevalence study got through ethics but then was effectively sat on by the [senior manager] who said I couldn't do it because I shouldn't be doing this study on my own students because the argument was you have a

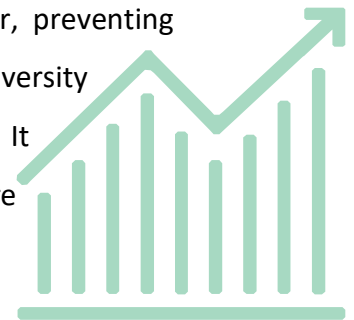
duty of care to these students so if anything is disclosed to you, you have to then report it to the police. Which is actually not true but it was kind of a weird rhetoric anyway...of course I've got a duty of care to them, that's why I want to know if they are being raped....that was partly because nobody was doing anything at that point...they were terrified of being marked out as worse than anywhere else...to be honest, given what the media are like, I don't blame them in some way...the media are completely unscrupulous on this issue...more recently I have not really experienced any barriers to doing this type of work in my own institution or elsewhere, I don't think.' (Participant 4, Academic Staff)

It would seem that sometimes institutional responses that claim to want to protect students from exposure of SV are, in fact, wishing to protect themselves from being exposed as institutions in which SV takes place. A similar argument can be made about those participants describing ethics committees who claim to want to protect students from intrusive and/or sensitive questioning but are in fact protecting the reputation of their university by refusing ethical clearance for research on SV. At least five other interview participants describe ethics committees as barriers to research taking place. Sometimes this is because ethics committees go beyond their remit and focus on university reputation rather than ethical considerations.

'...the ethics committee went outside its role, which was to look at the ethics of the research and not the reputational interest, if you like, of the university... that stalled the research for about a year, and it turned out to be motivated by fears about asking questions, which are quite normal questions to ask in sexual violence research. But they were coming out of an ethics committee as opposed to senior management.' (Participant 7, Academic Staff)

'...when it came to actually...send out the survey, we were suddenly...our ethics was suddenly deemed not acceptable even though it had been through ethical processes at the school level and it was bumped up to the university ethics committee. So, there was an immediate concern about the data that we were gathering, what we were going to do with this data, and it was never said outright to us but clearly what was at stake was the reputation of the university.' (Participant 10, Academic Staff)

It appears that universities are concerned about their reputations which have become increasingly important within the neo-liberal context of a marketized higher education sector where universities must compete for students (Phipps, 2018). However, preventing research that explores the prevalence of sexual violence at a specific university due to reputational issues will not make SV at that institution disappear. It merely makes it more hidden or 'air-brushed' (ibid) thus making it more difficult for those with such experiences to speak out and access support.



University-based research on sexual violence on campus should be read as a marker that the institution is striving to improve its response to SV.

Key Points

- A wide range of research and evaluation activities were reported. The most commonly reported evaluation activity is online anonymous reporting tools for students experiencing SV. This is not research but is widely seen as an evaluative measure of the success of introducing reporting systems and raising awareness about SV and harassment.
- Other research approaches reported are feedback from participants and university-wide surveys. The latter can provide baseline data to support longitudinal change and provide evidence of the particular, local issues within an institution. The former is of limited empirical value since it does not provide any 'objective' measure of behaviour or culture change.
- Research methodologies adopting pre-/post-measures are most often reported in relation to bystander intervention activities.
- Overall, research is most likely to be undertaken by student services or academics.
- The range of types of research methodologies used and the source of the research raises questions about the rigour of the methodologies and the evidence being produced about effectiveness and 'what works'.

- Lecturers/ researchers are less likely to know of research being undertaken compared to those in other roles e.g. student services.
- Academic research staff working in the field have been involved with research developments to inform the work of their institution in implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations in just over half of responses and this is significantly more likely in post-1992 universities.
- A small number of survey respondents highlight that academic research is not necessarily supported or acted upon by senior management.
- Gaining ethical approval for studies can also be difficult for some researchers due to institutional fears on the part of ethics committees for their university's reputation.

Chapter 6 - Research and Evaluation – Recommendations

24. Universities should encourage a range of sexual violence research in their universities which utilises academically robust methodologies to better understand the effectiveness of their efforts, and to target resources appropriately.

25. UUK should develop guidance on what constitutes academically robust methodologies with examples of good practice.

26. The safety and well-being of students and staff should be prioritised above reputational issues.

27. UUK must provide specialist gold standard ethical guidance for researchers, ethics committees and senior management in the field of sexual violence and harassment research within universities to ensure research is able to be carried out and published.

28. The OfS must ensure a direct complaint route for researchers and compliance with ethical standards must be a condition of registration.

7. Sustainability

One of the key drivers underpinning responses from English and Welsh universities to the UUK (2016) recommendations has been the Catalyst funding. Our survey was interested in activities conducted as part of this initiative as well as how the impetus is going to be sustained beyond Catalyst funding. Out of 60 survey respondents answering the question about funding, 41 had received Catalyst funding. Eighteen interview participants had been in receipt of Catalyst funding.

Funding is the most important factor associated with sustainability and is reported as a key facilitator and, where there is a lack of funding, a key barrier to universities being able to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations.

In response to the subsequent question asking whether the ending of the funding will cause problems for sustainability of the work at their institution, sixty respondents answered the question. Of these, 14 respondents (24%) indicate that the ending of that funding will create an



issue for sustainability; 29 (49%) indicate that sustainability might become an issue; and only sixteen (27%) report that the end of Catalyst funding will not be problematic.

Analysis of the qualitative responses given in response to the question asking for further explanation about this resulted in four themes: these were 'don't know' (n=13, 32%); 'no it would not present a problem' (n=6, 15%); 'no but it might present a problem' (n=9, 22%); and 'yes it would present a problem' (n=9, 22%).

Uncertain if sustainability is a problem

Most survey respondents and four interview participants do not know the answer to this question, either because they are not involved with the decision-making at their institution or because decisions are currently being taken within their institutions that are also affected by other factors. For example, one survey respondent explains that everything is on hold until their

new Vice Chancellor takes up their position. Another explains:

‘The project manager role that is a key driver is part funded by HEFCE Catalyst funding. The University have match funded this for the duration of the project, but as yet there is no firm plan of how to ensure the work continues after this ends.’ (Survey respondent)

Sustainability is not a problem

Only six survey respondents are able to give an unqualified response that the work will be sustainable and most of these point to their institution picking up the costs of whatever the Catalyst funding has covered, typically a paid member of staff. For example:

‘Our Uni matched the funding awarded and has indicated that it will continue to fund the ongoing initiatives.’ (Survey respondent)

Three interview participants explain that their institution is already funding work and will continue to fund work going forward.

Sustainability might be a problem

A larger group of survey respondents (n=9) and interview participants (n=6) are more cautious about whether the work will be sustainable. Participants explain that at the end of funding for a role the work attributed to that role has been distributed to existing staff in, mainly, overstretched student services or underfunded Student Unions. They feel that this did not bode well for their ability to continue to deliver on the UUK (2016) recommendations in the same way as when funding is available.

Some point to a reliance on staff and student volunteers to train and deliver interventions such as bystander interventions. For these respondents the absence of dedicated responsibility for overseeing this work as part of a paid role means they are wary about long-term sustainability. Others are convinced of their institution’s commitment to implementing the recommendations, but worried about their ability to deliver in the absence of any dedicated funding and/or staff.

‘The funding was used initially on a short-term role which has now expired, and training for staff. We are now looking into where we move forward from here, and so it may be a challenge to keep the project sustainable without the role being in place anymore.’

However, having the person in post at the start of the project meant that certain areas are now established, and this is helpful in now moving the project forward.’ (Survey respondent)

‘Funding for student engagement on this agenda is key, and we will rely heavily on the Student Union to work with us on this, which will be somewhat dependent on the officers’ agendas.’ (Survey respondent)

Sustainability will be a problem

An equal number of survey respondents (n=9) are clear that the end of Catalyst funding means that the work will not and/or cannot be sustained. So too are five interview participants. All are very clear that without extra central funding, developing the UUK (2016) recommendations cannot be sustained in the current economic climate.

‘Hard enough to get match funding. No evidence of supporting it by resourcing it.’ (Survey respondent)

‘The HEFCE funding was partly to make recommendations for the way forward, and there are no guarantees that funding will be allocated to implement the recommendations. A year’s funding is very short to be able to implement long-term changes.’ (Survey respondent)

Interview participants explain that the Catalyst Funding provided a useful starting point or opportunity to develop and pilot activities. It is also seen as useful in helping universities to begin to understand what their obligations are. However, any long-term impact and cultural change is believed to be dependent on senior management support, including the availability of funding. There is a concern that progress might cease or be undone. Some of those interviewed who had been seconded to work around this agenda have already returned to their previous roles at the time of interview owing to the ending of Catalyst Funding.

‘...the HEFCE funding was useful but I think it was a one-year, short-term thing and there needs to be a way in which... One year won’t make any difference. Students are here over three years and to shift culture takes a very long time, and you’ve just got to think of this as a prominent responsibility as part of the responsibility of the university...HEFCE funding was great, it got things going but it’s all going to come to an end. As I said, most of those 62 universities, this process will not be ongoing. But then what is the point?’ (Participant 6, Academic Staff)

‘I don’t know what the future will hold for [university] in terms of sexual violence work.

I'm worried, and it might be an unfair worry, but I'm worried that we might [be] in a place where it feels like we've done really well at that now, so we've ticked that box and then things are allowed to slide. Actually, we're doing okay but we've still got a shedload of stuff to do. We're nowhere near where we need to be and I just think taking the foot off the throttle at this stage, the danger is that the issue will just get kicked into the long grass again.' (Participant 9, Student Staff)

For at least ten interview participants, individual champions with specific responsibility for promoting the work to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations are seen as crucial.

Short-term funding for dedicated staff members is considered unhelpful in this respect. So too is adding the work to the existing role of individuals.

Many participants feel that they have to undertake the work by themselves and so the capacity of individual champions should be considered.

'[Student Union] is just expected to roll out that training, and we're resourcing it all again because it is something that's a priority for us, but in terms of how that is going to be made sustainable across the university, because of some of the barriers they have faced with staff...I do worry about the effectiveness of it being continued. And I worry about how it's actually going to be continued if they don't have specific members of staff responsible for implementing it.' (Participant 14, Student Support Staff)

'What would be great is if a member of staff who does not have a limited contract...say if the chancellor or the vice-chancellor was held accountable...that would be a really good way of implementing changes from the top and then coming from the top, they can then delegate out ways in which that can be done...holding one person accountable over a five or six year turnover...one year is far too short a time to change a culture. It does really need to come from the top.' (Participant 1, Student Support Staff)

Existing individual champions are identified at senior management levels but also at other levels such as project managers or co-ordinators. Generally, it is identified that individual champions need to have enough time to devote to the work, be 'senior enough' and 'committed enough' to drive the agenda forward.

Notably, ways of ensuring sustainability are considered beyond the university, for example, one participant suggests that an individual champion should be responsible for overseeing the

implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations across all universities:

'I think they definitely would need more resources and support and advice from other organisations and even a push from the top or from Universities UK saying, 'There needs to be a legacy with this project'. Putting one person in charge of that who is going to be here for a long time, hopefully. I think there definitely needs to be more support and more funding.' (Participant 1, Student Support Staff)

As reported above, resources are a key issue underpinning sustainability. Resources are linked to funding but also include time and capacity. Almost all of the interview participants (21 out of 25) say that resources are needed to provide sufficient staff time and new dedicated posts. Skilled and experienced staff are identified as needed to drive the agenda, to maintain momentum and address the multiple components of work. Having one dedicated staff member is considered fortunate for those institutions who had them but also insufficient. Participants stressed that one person can only do so much and in some cases they are worried about the diversity of tasks needed to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations, e.g. training staff, training students and conducting investigations. One participant suggests that being 'spread too thinly' could leave universities open to mistakes in an already contentious, high risk and high-profile area. Interview participants explain that resources need to be consistent and systematic, and that the work attached to implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations needs to be embedded in the institutional culture of what universities do. As one head of student services suggests, having additional resources will enable them to embed the work so that it becomes 'business as usual'.

Sometimes, existing staff members are seconded for a short period or expected to undertake the role in addition to their present duties which can then impact on other areas of their work. Where staff posts have been created these are frequently short-term or temporary with no clarity around possible continuation. In one example, a short-term post was maintained following the end of the Catalyst funding but only temporarily. As noted above, in some instances roles end following the close of Catalyst funding or internal university funding. This means that the work and impetus developed cannot be continued and this is considered short-sighted.

One interview participant describes additional funds for student services being secured as a result of presenting data evidencing a significantly increased demand and strong backing from a new chief operating officer around the allocation of resources.

Ten interview participants explain that senior management support does not always necessarily result in sufficient resources being provided and suggest this may be due to multiple and conflicting pressures that have funding implications

Participants identify multiple ways their institutions could be doing more if resources are available to enable them to do so. For example:

‘We did have a team, but due to the restructure and changing and job roles and titles changing, a lot of staff did not have the time to commit...there is a fear that we are not going to be able to handle the sexual violence reports with that team.’ (Participant 1, Student Support Staff)

‘...A lot of people were very supportive but whether they actually had the time to devote to helping us...it’s part of a broader thing about taking the problem seriously and seeing it as part of the university’s remit to engage. It needs more than one person preferably, but it needs buy-in...I think it will be something that perhaps falls off the agenda where there’s no immediate push for the institution to deal with that.’ (Participant 10, Academic Staff)

‘...we’re all quite ready and willing to take disclosures and to support the students, but in terms of resource we have all got other roles. The management team that’s around that as well have also got a number of projects on. So, I think the biggest barrier at the moment is resource and having the time to focus.’ (Participant 17, Student Support Staff)

Resources need to be allocated for all aspects which address the UUK (2016) recommendations including research and evaluation as well as delivery. This is identified by at least six interview participants. For example, a participant from student support services says that it is difficult for them to evidence the effectiveness of their work without resources for research and evaluation, and this is echoed by academic participants:

‘...this is something I’ve been doing entirely on top of my workload. It has been quite a significant additional burden...In the first couple of years, it was quite exhausting, because there was a lot more hands-on work, and we were very much initiating and implementing everything....it’s still something I do in addition to my regular work.’ (Participant 19, Academic Staff)

When queried, interview participants are unsure why this additional work or need for additional support is not fully recognised. Some explain that universities often rely on the goodwill of colleagues to do the work. In one example, after a successful piece of work conducted in one department, other departments were enthusiastic about also providing the intervention and prevention programme, but the academics voluntarily driving the work forward were unable to provide longer-term support to assist with implementation in those departments.

Interview participants also explain their expectation that as activities continue, increased reporting and demand for various actions e.g. staff training, prevention activities, interventions, response and support etc will inevitably increase. They suggest this will therefore require more substantive resources and possibly accountability, and should be anticipated in institutional planning.

Ten interview participants indicated that insufficient resources also mean that current activities are targeted at specific groups. Examples have shown that bystander interventions will be targeted at first year students, student leaders or sports societies, and training around responding to disclosures is sometimes only delivered to student support staff. Insufficient resources also mean that going forward more costly activities such as bystander interventions cannot be sustained in comparison to other activities such as poster campaigns. For example:

*‘The only thing that we are not sustaining is *The Intervention Initiative* with the college but again that’s just down to time and resource because it took a lot of time to do. So, everything else is carrying on from our end, perhaps not on the scale that it was but it definitely is going to sustain.’ (Participant 11, Student Support Staff)*

Key Points

- Not all survey respondents received Catalyst funding for their SV work. However, for over a quarter of those that did, the ending of the funding is going to create an issue for sustainability, and over half said that it might do so.

- For those survey respondents (n=6) who are confident the work would continue they explain that their institution will be picking up the costs of whatever the Catalyst funding had covered, typically a paid member of staff.
- Most respondents are concerned about the sustainability of this work and conceive of resources in broader terms than only financial including staff time, workload and capacity, organization of timetabling, availability of venues and administrative support; and locate these concerns within a broader context of already overstretched student services, staff shortages and underfunded student unions.
- Some interventions such as bystander approaches rely on staff and student volunteers to train and deliver interventions, which has implications for the work over the longer term, and points to the need for a coordinator to oversee the long-term organisation of these interventions.

Chapter 7 – Sustainability - Recommendations

29. Universities must employ dedicated staff on secure contracts to oversee the promotion and implementation of the 2016 recommendations.

30. Universities must ensure sexual violence and harassment is part of the senior management governance processes in order to provide verbal support backed with sufficient and sustained financial resources.

31. The OfS must require governance processes to be in place and must ensure that specialist training is available and taken up by those in a governance role as part of the conditions of registration.

8. Barriers to implementing UUK (2016) recommendations

One of the key reasons for undertaking this study was to explore what the barriers and facilitators have been for HEIs in enacting the recommendations from UUK (2016) in order to enable some sharing of information about what works and what is less successful.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the challenges they had within their institutions in progressing their activities to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations. 154 responses were received from 68 respondents, which are detailed in Table 8.1 below.

By far the most prevalent challenge (24%, n=37) reported is receiving verbal support but insufficient investment of resources (staff, time, finances).

Only a quarter of respondents to this question (n=17) say they have not experienced any problems at their university.

There is a statistical difference when comparing the type of university respondents work in and those who report problems “securing buy-in from ‘senior enough’ management”: respondents in post-1992 universities report greater difficulty in doing so (25.0%) compared to pre-1992 universities (8.8%), $F(1, n=101)=4.905$, $p=.026$. Respondents in post-1992 universities are also *significantly more likely* to report challenging perceptions within their universities that the UUK (2016) recommendations are ‘not a priority for the institution’ (15.9%) compared to pre-1992 universities (3.5%), $F(1, n=101)=4.704$, $p=.034$.

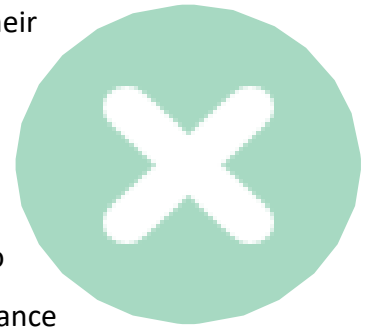
Table 8.1 Challenges Faced by Respondents When Implementing UUK (2016) Recommendations

Challenges Faced by Respondents when Implementing the UUK (2016) Recommendations	Number of Respondents (%)
We have had verbal support but not sufficient investment of resources (staff, time, finances)	37 (24%)
Other	20 (13%)
We have had problems with fears about the risks to the institution's reputation	18 (12%)
We have had no problems at our university	17 (11%)
We have had problems securing buy-in from 'senior enough' management	16 (10%)
We have had problems with fears about raising concerns in students that are disproportionate to the risks	15 (10%)
We have had problems challenging perceptions that the UUK SV Agenda is not a problem at our institution	9 (6%)
We have had problems challenging perceptions that the UUK SV Agenda is not a priority for our institution	9 (6%)
We have had difficulties in securing ethical approval for this work	7 (5%)
We have had problems with the institution seeming to ignore the UUK SV Agenda	6 (4%)
Total	154 (100%)

In a follow-up question, survey respondents were asked to provide open text responses to the question asking about the most enduring challenges they face in their institution. Fifty-five respondents gave responses that mirror those indicated in Table 7.1 and coalesce around three core themes also evident in the follow-up interviews: a lack of perception that sexual violence and harassment is important; the problems of introducing culture change into large institutions; and the lack of resources.

A lack of perception that SV/harassment is an important issue for universities to tackle

Twenty-six respondents describe a range of ways they have experienced their universities communicating that SV/harassment is not an important or priority issue for them.



These include: research being held up by ethics committees; references to reputational damage as a way of curtailing or down-playing action; active resistance to implementing the agenda; and the ways in which what is introduced is constrained to activities rather than culture change.

Indeed, in response to being asked what they think the enduring challenge to implementing the UUK (2016) agenda has been in their experience one survey respondent said: 'UUK guidance being seen as a project, with a start and end date, rather than a catalyst for change'.

However, the fact that having a lack of senior management leadership on the issue was the most mentioned is a sign that the issue is not being taken seriously.

'The lack of perception of it being important. The tiny pockets that have happened (which are great in themselves) I think are possibly imbuing senior managers with the sense that work has been done by mid-level managers - but upon closer inspection this is clearly not the case at all, and my university is years behind others in the agenda. I think this might be because there are no VAW specialist researchers pushing for change or advising. There's a real sense of 'it doesn't happen here'. Student cases are very reluctant to investigate anything and seem to be operating to an old-fashioned Zellick⁵-like manner.' (Survey respondent)

'[T]he vice-chancellor in particular doesn't want to touch the issue at all. Others know the work is going on, but nobody has put their head above the parapet to put their name on it yet.' (Participant 20, Student Support Staff)

Lack of Resources

⁵ The 1994 Zellick Report provided guidance for universities that resulted in incidents of sexual violence that could be criminal offences being handled as matters for the police. More recent guidance (UUK 2016) provides for universities enacting disciplinary procedures in these situations regardless of whether a criminal justice system outcome is pursued <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/guidance-for-higher-education-institutions.aspx>

Twenty-two respondents named a lack of resources (time, expertise, funding, consistency in staff) as the most enduring challenge for their institution. The concerns described here mirror the discussion in Chapter 6 on sustainability and are therefore not repeated.

Challenges of Effecting Change in Large Organisations

Twenty-one survey respondents talk about the challenges of trying to get a large institution to focus on and prioritise addressing SV. References are made to writing and implementing appropriate policies and/or making decisions with people who have not got any expertise in SV/harassment; how the time required for decision-making and rolling out initiatives can seriously impede the progress of the work, especially for staff on fixed term contracts; the logistical difficulties of writing a coherent strategy; the problems attached to partnership working both within the university – across departments, services and/or with the Students Union – and with external partners; the challenges of communicating with students and staff to engage them in participating in and/or facilitating prevention activities and/or to inform them about reporting and support systems; and of the challenges of having many other competing ‘priorities’ within the institution that also require resource, policies and best practice.

‘Like many institutions we suffer from initiative overload. There are so many initiatives being pursued concurrently with the available resources spread so thinly across all these that it is not possible to generate real momentum.’ (Survey respondent)

‘The size of the institution and hence the number of people who need to be involved before authority can be given to make decisions. Staff with expertise in specific fields, but no awareness of the agenda being in control of decisions has been frustrating. IT and legal/data protection have been the most significant difficulties. Marketing have also been challenging in terms of wanting to come up with their own ideas rather than take guidance - with little awareness of the topic and sensitivities.’ (Survey respondent)

Key Points

- Survey respondents identify a lack of resource most often as a barrier to implementing the recommendations of the UUK (2016) report.

- Post-1992 universities face more challenging institutional contexts, with them being statistically more likely to report problems securing 'senior enough' management buy-in and with challenging perceptions that implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations is not a priority for the institution compared to pre-1992 universities.
- Analysis of interviews identify three key barriers to promoting the UUK (2016) recommendations: a lack of understanding of the seriousness of SV in universities; a lack of resources (e.g. financial, staff, time, expertise), including concerns about sustainability; and the challenges of effecting change in large organisations.

Chapter 8 - Barriers to Implementation - Recommendations

32. UUK and the OfS should constantly reinforce positive messages to senior management leadership across the HE sector about the importance and value of implementing the UUK.

33. The OfS must make the sustainable allocation of funding by every university a condition of registration, for example by requiring the ringfencing of a proportion of fee income.

C.f. Chapter 5 recommendation 21. OfS must explore methods to ensure consistency of funding across the sector for long-term sustainability.

34. The OfS must ensure that a baseline of resources are equally committed across institutions and should not allocate resources using a bidding system.

9. Facilitators to implementing UUK (2016) recommendations

A thematic analysis of the free text responses to the question asking what made the most positive impact on promoting the UUK (2016) recommendations at their institution produces the following:



These factors are the converse of the barriers to implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations outlined in the previous chapter.

When considering these responses, it should be noted that, as we showed earlier, universities are at widely varying points in responding to the UUK (2016) recommendations related to SV. Some universities had started work prior to the UUK (2016) report being published and others are at the very beginning of their journeys at the time of the survey.

Partnership Working

In previous chapters we have discussed the importance of senior management buy-in, having a whole institution approach, the importance of academic expertise and research, reporting

systems for victims of SV and prevention activities. In this chapter, we will focus on partnership working as a facilitator to achieving change both within and external to the university.

Internal University Partners

Fifteen interview participants cite the importance of partnership working across the university with services such as student accommodation/ residential services, student registry, timetabling, the chaplaincy, communications, security, human resources and senior managers. These relationships can be important at both strategic level and operational levels.

‘... a group of people across the university who are regularly meeting.... really helps keep the momentum going. And so having that kind of operations group – so I’ve got HR on it, I have Comms on it, I have the SU, I have three students that are representatives...sport, theatre and music...various colleges...our safeguarding officer...equality and diversity... by default, kind of creates champions in different areas of the university because, by being part of a group, they take on this responsibility of promoting the issues and keeping the conversation going across in their different departments.’ (Participant 13, Student Support Staff)

Partnerships with External Organisations

Respondents are keen to point to the importance of universities working in partnership with local organisations to provide their expertise in a range of ways - as advisors, as trainers, as providers of services:

‘Raising awareness of an on-going issue. Linking with local services and charities, to help promote the support available for sexual violence victims such as: The local SARC Rape Crisis, Refuge, ISVA services, SAFE Network for Young people, Victims First, Victims Support, the local GUM clinic, inking with the local police and promoting their campaigns, creating referral networks internally and externally to support from within and outside the University. Working closely with the SU to promote the agenda. Educating staff on the prevalence of the SV issue, and how to respond to disclosures, setting up a support service, for students who are affected by SV, ensuring they continue and feel empowered to study here, despite previous circumstances, promoting the idea that we do everything we can to believe and support victims. Raising awareness within the SMT and gaining their acknowledgement of the need to do more in this area to support students and try to prevent (minimise) incidents of SV.’ (Survey respondent)

Interviews were used to explore in more depth the issue of working in partnership with external agencies who might have expertise in SV. Almost all interview participants (n=22) detail some form of collaborative activities and largely focus on working with sexual and domestic violence

organisations, although sometimes the police were also mentioned. The role of Student Unions were also identified, and one participant described a close partnership with their local GP practice.

Specialist Services

The specialist expertise and knowledge of sexual and domestic violence and abuse (DVA) organisations are understood as essential to enhance the support offered to students by way of:

- The delivery of disclosure and/or awareness training by SV and DVA specialist organisations to university staff.
- Having a campus presence such as attending events and providing information e.g. in the form of a stall.
- Contribution to university advisory boards/ task force groups.
- Involvement in producing university campaigns and publications.
- Providing direct support and counselling services within student support services.
- Delivering prevention activities such as bystander programmes.
- Developing direct referral routes from universities to specialist SV and DVA services.

‘The staff training...I worked with the Rape Crisis trainer and she and I put the course together.... For students, the induction awareness talks...I had our police and Rape Crisis and our counselling service all review the material prior to delivering it...’ (Participant 13, Student Support Staff)

‘We put in place bystander intervention training...But we insisted, we had to push quite hard for this, that it was delivered by facilitators outside of the university....It had to be very experiential and facilitated in a meaningful way... these are experts that we could send our students to, but also, resource these places to be able to take our students, so just accepting to take on extra work, then it saves us having to do it all in-house, and build a case for partnership working, rather than just hiring people up to do it. So, that has been handy, yes.’ (Participant 19, Academic Staff)

‘...we have worked with somebody who is an independent sexual violence advocate who also works for Women’s Aid. So, she’s the person who came in initially via our Students’ Union to offer like a peer support group but has now moved into offering individual appointments. She’s worked within a sort of advisory capacity.’ (Participant 8, Student Support Staff)

There are, however, some concerns about the constraints of partnership working. These include the impacts of tendering processes that might result in a partner agency losing the local contract to deliver specialist SV services with the attendant impacts for universities having to work with the successful new organisation. Other concerns are about the extra demands that universities might place on local specialist providers when referring staff and students to them when they already have limited funding and long waiting lists. Funding specialist services to deliver training or direct support activities is seen as going some way to remedy this and ensure that students receive appropriate and timely support. Although this expertise has costs attached, one respondent remarked how relatively 'cheap' they are.

Despite such concerns, over a third of interview participants think there is room for community partners to play a greater role in two key areas.

Firstly, participants acknowledge the need for improved links with sexual assault referral centres and DVA services and the removal of barriers such as postcode boundaries that limit the accessibility of services.

Secondly, suggestions about what kind of direct support might be available to universities include more of the activities identified above e.g. direct delivery of bystander training by specialist services.

These are seen to have the advantage of providing immediate support for any disclosures and remove pressure from university staff who do not have the skills or capacity to deliver multiple sessions across large numbers of staff and students.

It is also highlighted that not all SV/ DVA services support male victims. Universities providing funding to external specialist services could result in negotiating access for male victims by increasing service capacity.

Greater collaboration is also believed to have the additional advantage that specialist partners can continue to support a student who has left the university:

'...we are quite lucky because we've always had really good relationships with our stakeholders prior to all this work happening, so the police, the council, the SU, the Rape and Sexual Support Services... the only gap is actually having an IDVA as part of our student service...if it's a second year student and they might have been raped and it goes to court, it could take until after they leave university for it to get to court. So, we can only support them up until they leave, whereas an IDVA can support them all the way through. So, the only gap for me would be actually getting that specialist [support] from the community into the university, to remove that barrier for students to access them, to improve our support a little bit further.' (Participant 11, Student Support Staff)

Police

Partnerships with the local police are also seen as key by some participants to facilitate information sharing, shared campaign messages, policy review, and advice as part of a strategy group. Some participants believe that more work is needed around what it means to work alongside the police to investigate SV and how that translates into action that the university can take. There are concerns that some universities still adhere to old Zellick guidelines suggesting that unless the student reported to the police then universities cannot or will not investigate. Respondents talk about the need for improved guidance for the whole sector where the police decide to take no further action.

'...under the old Zellick guidance, universities really just didn't do anything, particularly if the police were involved, and I just don't think that's enough in today's climate, and I'm not sure the UUK guidance quite got to the heart of what universities should and shouldn't do in various situations where the police may or may not be involved, or where a survivor has not yet decided what action criminally they want to take with the police.' (Participant 12, Student Support Staff)

Participants suggest that because the standard of proof is different and based on 'the balance of probability' rather than 'beyond reasonable doubt', distinctions need to be drawn between what the police might be doing and what the university can and should be doing. Interview participants are concerned that victim/survivors do not suffer secondary trauma as a result of university processes replicating the failures of the criminal justice system.

'...in terms of our policies and particularly our procedures...there's a lot of brain work to be done on how we can enable a system that is fairer and doesn't repeat the re-

traumatising effects of the criminal justice system.’ (Participant 9, Student Support Staff)

Student Unions

Almost all interview participants (n=22) speak about the importance of student union involvement, with four of these locating them as champions of the agenda or as key to working with student support services.



‘...the Students’ Union have been brilliant working with us on this and obviously this has been over a number of sabbatical officers and they’ve all been invested in it and all been keen to work on it, which is really useful... been a constant [focus], which has been really helpful to us...our Students’ Union have tried to develop a code of conduct around this work...they’ve introduced Ask Angela and a policy is in place...they are in the process of trying to roll it out and getting other venues to sign up to it.’ (Participant 3, Student Support Staff)

However, two of these participants did note some difficulties in working collaboratively with Students’ Union representatives. As an exception, three additional participants described negative experiences with Students’ Unions, where they have not necessarily been the voice of progress.

Several interviewees also speak about the importance of building good partnership relationships with providers in the night-time economy, as advocated in the UUK (2016) recommendations. Participants suggest that training, policies, campaigns, reporting and response can therefore be consistent and fluid both on and off campus to ensure the safety of students.

Key Points

- Barriers mirror facilitators to achieving implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations.
- Senior management buy-in, backed up with adequate and sustainable resources in a strategy that takes a ‘whole institution’ approach and which is supported by academic research and expertise and partnership working both within the university and with

external partners are the key messages about how success can be achieved in implementing the UUK (2016) recommendations.

- The importance of partnership working with external partners is seen as key by all interviewees in enabling universities to develop best practice and implement UUK (2016) recommendations.

Chapter 9 - Facilitators to implementation

C.f. Chapter 7, recommendation 30. Universities must ensure sexual violence and harassment is part of the senior management governance processes in order to provide verbal support backed with sufficient and sustained financial resources.

35. Universities must encourage internal partnership working across services and departments in order to achieve a whole institution approach to enacting the UUK (2016) recommendations.

36. Universities must implement partnership working with external organisations to ensure that the necessary skills, knowledge and expertise in SV are engaged in the delivery of UUK (2016) recommendations, especially in relation to prevention, response and reporting activities.

37. The OfS must ensure that evidence of partnership working is a condition of registration.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was carried out in 2018, during the second year of the HEFCE Catalyst funding which made targeted funding available (through a bidding process) to encourage universities to implement the recommendations of the UUK (2016) report. This was comparatively early days since the report had been published which is reflected in the finding that only approximately a fifth (21%) of the survey respondents indicated that their institution were at a point in their progress where they were able to review what had been done and identify next steps.

Most respondents indicated that their institution was quite early in their journey to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations.

The core themes that emerge throughout the report are addressed in our recommendations:

The need for universities to take a whole institution approach if they are to really achieve a change in culture	The importance of having senior management championing the work	The need for adequate resources to support the implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations
The need for partnership building to take place both within universities and with specialist organisations outside universities		Addressing the reliance many institutions have had on individual champions building alliances across their institutions to make things happen
The need to ensure that work is evidence based and then evaluated with credible research methodologies		
The need to directly involve students through their unions or otherwise	The need for a mandatory legal duty to ensure accountability of universities to the OfS and between the OfS and the government	

Whilst many respondents report a wide range of innovative activities intended to promote the

UUK (2016) agenda and implement the recommendations, there is also a strong theme that this is not an easy task. Lack of resources are fundamental to the work being delivered thoroughly. Resources are not only identified in monetary terms but also in time dedicated to the work, commitment from senior management, and recognition that this is a long-term process of change.

The end of the Catalyst funding has been met with concern by most who did not feel confident that the work would continue to be funded in the same form or if at all in their institution. There was a sense conveyed by participants that the work needed to change the culture is still not fully recognised and that, with pressures on budgets, it might easily be diluted and/or side-lined because of pressures to address other issues (such as racism, substance use, gambling, mental health) that become priorities in response to media headlines and/or individual tragic events becoming public. Of course, these issues are crucial but are often presented as competing instead of interconnected and intersectional, and simultaneously important.

Most respondents report that it is only by making it mandatory for universities to engage with the UUK (2016) report that the work will be delivered in a consistent way and embedded in the life of each university. Most respondents wanted (albeit reluctantly for some) to see universities have a mandatory responsibility to implement the recommendations and the Office for Students with a mandatory obligation to report on implementation to the government.

The UUK (2016) report is ambitious and radical. It calls for a change in culture in universities. This speaks to the institutional structures that have historically marginalised the voices of those victimised by sexual violence. It calls for root and branch change to create a culture in which SV is understood to be unacceptable, that creates an environment of trust where students and staff can believe they will be listened to and responded to appropriately, of embedding prevention measures to inform everybody about what is not acceptable as well as what individuals should do if they experience or witness SV. It also speaks to addressing the institutional inequalities that have supported a culture of victim-blaming and /or of not

believing victims and of colluding with and/or protecting alleged perpetrators. It demands that power dynamics within institutions are addressed with attention to recruitment, promotion and progression policies and the gender pay gap.

The importance of understanding SV through an intersectional feminist lens is crucial for those academics who took part in the telephone interviews. It is a feminist understanding of Gender-Based violence that problematises the institution, society and the structural inequalities embedded in them, whilst centring the voice of survivors. Yet, SV is not a problem for only one social group. It is essential that in addressing SV we are also addressing racism, homo, bi and trans phobia, that we are addressing ableism and classism. These are not separate issues but intersecting issues. The solutions lie in understanding and making the connections between experiences of victimisation and the ways in which structural inequalities very often render victims as unreliable and unimportant. Changing the culture must involve making common cause to address the abuses of power wherever and however they take place.

Recommendations

<p>Chapter 1</p> <p>Introduction</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Universities must embed implementation of the UUK (2016) Recommendations into properly supported working practices and governance processes. 2. The OfS should develop an audit tool and assess where individual universities are at in terms of implementation of the UUK (2016) Recommendations as part of a body of work geared towards attaining consistency across the sector
<p>Chapter 2</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. UUK should develop a clear working definition of what constitutes 'evidence-based' approaches for universities to use in order to better evaluate their prevention activities and provide examples of good practice. 4. Universities should use evidence-based interventions for prevention

<p>Prevention</p>	<p>activities and evaluate their impact.</p> <p>5. Universities should embed and integrate evidence-based prevention into the curricula.</p> <p>6. The OfS must require embedded evidence-based prevention as part of the conditions for registration in order to ensure consistency across the sector.</p>
<p>Chapter 3</p> <p>Policy and Strategy</p>	<p>7. UUK should provide a best practice template for a sexual violence and harassment policy which includes disciplinary procedures with key non-negotiables, and which can be minimally tailored to suit each university’s unique institutional context. This should address both student - student and staff – student allegations.</p> <p>8. UUK should provide best practice templates for codes of conduct for students and staff which explicitly address sexual violence and harassment.</p> <p>9. Universities must adopt a policy and codes of conduct based on the templates and ensure clear ownership within governance processes for monitoring implementation.</p> <p>10. The OfS must require the adoption and implementation of a policy and code of conduct based on the templates as part of the conditions of registration and should develop audit measures to robustly monitor implementation and effectiveness of these in order to ensure consistency across the sector.</p>
<p>Chapter 4</p> <p>Reporting and Response</p>	<p>11. UUK should provide a best practice specialist-informed template on how to encourage safe and supportive reporting, which is the cornerstone for all effective responses.</p> <p>12. Resource must be invested by universities in training staff for support roles and investigative or other procedural roles. Training should be delivered by specialists working in the field of SV.</p>

	<p>13. Universities must continuously publicise and enhance the visibility of their reporting processes and support mechanisms to build confidence and trust to report and access support</p> <p>14. The OfS must require the adoption of safe and supportive reporting and staff training as part of the conditions of registration to ensure consistence across the sector</p>
<p>Chapter 5</p> <p>Accountability of Universities</p>	<p>C.f. Chapter 2 recommendation 5. Universities should embed and integrate evidence-based prevention into the curricula</p> <p>15. UUK should implement a kite mark system such as Athena SWAN as a way of rewarding compliance and best practice.</p> <p>16. UUK and OfS should work with the compilers of league tables to include measures relating to the implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations.</p> <p>17. OfS must include a measure of compliance into NSS survey.</p> <p>18. Research into other jurisdictions must be commissioned to explore the best approaches for the mandatory implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations and the link between compliance and central government funding should be explicitly explored.</p> <p>19. OfS must ensure the accountability of universities for the implementation of the UUK (2016) recommendations through the conditions of registration.</p> <p>20. UUK must provide a root and branch evaluation of the cost of ‘culture change’ and better guidance to the sector on what levels of resources are needed to implement the UUK (2016) recommendations.</p> <p>21. OfS must explore methods to ensure consistency of funding across the sector for long-term sustainability.</p> <p><i>C.f. Chapter 8, recommendation 33. The OfS must make the sustainable allocation of funding by every university a condition of registration, for</i></p>

	<p><i>example by requiring the ringfencing of a proportion of fee income (cross reference).</i></p> <p>22. Government must now consider primary legislation to impose legal duties on universities to prevent and respond to sexual violence and harassment.</p> <p>23. Government must ensure that the OfS is directly and transparently accountable for regulating universities’ compliance in a uniform, consistent, and sustainably resourced way.</p>
<p>Chapter 6</p> <p>Research and Evaluation</p>	<p>24. Universities should encourage a range of sexual violence research in their universities which utilises academically robust methodologies to better understand the effectiveness of their efforts, and to target resources appropriately</p> <p>25. UUK should develop guidance on what constitutes academically robust methodologies with examples of good practice (c.f. 3, Chapter 2, recommendation 3)</p> <p>26. The safety and well-being of students and staff should be prioritised above reputational issues.</p> <p>27. UUK must provide specialist gold standard ethical guidance for researchers, ethics committees and senior management in the field of sexual violence and harassment research within universities to ensure research is able to be carried out and published.</p> <p>28. The OfS must ensure a direct complaint route for researchers and compliance with ethical standards must be a condition of registration</p>
<p>Chapter 7</p>	<p>29. Universities must employ dedicated staff on secure contracts to oversee the promotion and implementation of the 2016 recommendations.</p> <p>30. Universities must ensure sexual violence and harassment is part of the</p>

<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>senior management governance processes in order to provide verbal support backed with sufficient and sustained financial resources.</p> <p>31. The OfS must require governance processes to be in place and must ensure that specialist training is available and taken up by those in a governance role as part of the conditions of registration.</p>
<p>Chapter 8</p> <p>Barriers to implementing UUK (2016) recommendations</p>	<p>32. UUK and the OfS should constantly reinforce positive messages to senior management leadership across the HE sector about the importance and value of implementing the UUK</p> <p>33. The OfS must make the sustainable allocation of funding by every university a condition of registration, for example by requiring the ringfencing of a proportion of fee income.</p> <p><i>C.f. Chapter 5 recommendation 21. OfS must explore methods to ensure consistency of funding across the sector for long-term sustainability</i></p> <p>34. The OfS must ensure that a baseline of resources are equally committed across institutions and should not allocate resources using a bidding system.</p>
<p>Chapter 9</p> <p>Facilitators to implementing UUK (2016) recommendations</p>	<p><i>C.f. Chapter 7, recommendation 30. Universities must ensure sexual violence and harassment is part of the senior management governance processes in order to provide verbal support backed with sufficient and sustained financial resources.</i></p> <p>35. Universities must encourage internal partnership working across services and departments in order to achieve a whole institution approach to enacting the UUK (2016) recommendations.</p> <p>36. Universities must implement partnership working with external organisations to ensure that the necessary skills, knowledge and expertise in SV are engaged in the delivery of UUK (2016) recommendations, especially in relation to prevention, response and reporting activities.</p>

	37. The OfS must ensure that evidence of partnership working is a condition of registration.
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