



Interim Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Policy

Policy Type: Board Policy
Policy Number: TCB26
Date Approved: 3 December 2025
Previous Policy: Not applicable
Review Date: 2 December 2026

1. OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Trinity College (the **College**) acknowledges that Gender-based Violence is unacceptable in the Trinity College community. The College is committed to taking effective action to prevent Gender-based Violence and to taking timely and appropriate action in response to Disclosures and Formal Reports of Gender-based Violence, and to meeting the requirements and expectations of the National GBV Code.
- 1.2 This Policy:
 - (a) outlines how a person may make a Disclosure or a Formal Report of Gender-based Violence;
 - (b) describes processes for preventing, responding to and addressing Gender-based Violence at the College.
- 1.3 The College is committed to responding to Disclosures or Formal Reports relating to Gender-based Violence in a way which is Person Centred and Trauma Informed.
- 1.4 Information on the factors that drive and contribute to Gender-based Violence, including factors specific to the College, are detailed in Appendix A.
- 1.5 This initial Policy takes effect on the date of approval and is subject to ongoing consultation and review (**Initial Review**). The Initial Review will be completed as soon as practicable, and no later than the first date for review in clause 14.
- 1.6 During the Initial Review period:
 - (a) this Policy is to be read and applied in conjunction with the Sexual Misconduct Policy, provided that if there is any inconsistency between this Policy and the Sexual Misconduct Policy, this Policy will prevail;
 - (b) the College will develop **Procedures** detailing the processes for managing and responding to **Disclosures** and **Formal Reports** of Gender-based Violence, with the Sexual Misconduct Procedures until such time as the Procedures are in place, provided that if there is any inconsistency between this Policy and the Sexual Misconduct Procedures, this Policy will prevail.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 All members of the College community are expected to behave in a manner which aligns with the College's values. Gender-based Violence of any form will not be tolerated by the College and will be addressed under this Policy, as well as any other College policy or Code of Conduct which applies to the relevant person.
- 2.2 This Policy applies to Residents and to Staff of the Residential College.
- 2.3 The College acknowledges that Gender-based Violence may occur:
 - (a) on all campuses and facilities of the College, including accommodation owned or operated by the College;
 - (b) at any College activity or event regardless of where the activity is held;
 - (c) in virtual environments (for example, email, intranet systems, social media, online forums, communities and platforms) whether or not hosted by the College; or
 - (d) at any other location off-campus involving a Resident during a period in which the Resident is a resident of the College.
- 2.4 In accordance with the National GBV Code, a Discloser is entitled to elect that the University of Melbourne lead the response to a Disclosure of Gender-based Violence. Where the University of Melbourne leads the response to a Disclosure:
 - (a) the College will:
 - (i) cooperate with the University of Melbourne;
 - (ii) with the consent of the Discloser, or where necessary to protect the wellbeing and safety of students and Staff, share information regarding the Disclosure with the University of Melbourne; and
 - (iii) implement any outcomes decided by the University of Melbourne subject to the College's obligations at law;
 - (b) clause 3 to 9 (inclusive) of this Policy will not apply to the response to a Disclosure of Gender-based Violence, which will be managed under the University of Melbourne policies and procedures.
- 2.5 This Policy should be read in conjunction with other College policies and codes. Where the College leads the response to a Disclosure or Formal Report of Gender-based Violence, this Policy will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency. Where College is not leading the response to a Disclosure or Formal Report, the College retains the right to take any action it determines necessary under any other applicable policy or code.

3. MAKING A DISCLOSURE OR FORMAL REPORT

- 3.1 A Disclosure or a Formal Report may be made to the College by any Resident, member of Staff or a third party who experiences alleged Gender-based Violence, where the Respondent is a Resident or Staff member of the Residential College.
- 3.2 A Disclosure or Formal Report may be made:
 - (a) In person, by email, by phone or online;
 - (b) via the **Online Reporting system** (which may be anonymous).

3.3 Where a Disclosure or Formal Report is made anonymously, the College will take reasonable and proportionate action where possible, including by identifying any trends and risks to inform further action.

4. MANAGING DISCLOSURES

4.1 When a Disclosure or Formal Report is received, the College will:

- (a) undertake a risk assessment to identify any ongoing risks and implement measures to manage and monitor any identified risks;
- (b) take any necessary immediate action proportionate to the risk arising from the Disclosure to Residents or Staff, which may include removing the Respondent from the College or arranging urgent support for the Discloser and/or the Respondent.

4.2 The College will have regard to the wishes of the Discloser when determining the pathway by which it will manage the Disclosure, which may include:

- (a) A resolution implemented with the agreement of the Discloser and the Respondent;
- (b) The implementation of safety measures without progressing to an investigation;
- (c) A decision not to proceed with an investigation of a Disclosure in specific circumstances;
- (d) A decision to progress to an investigation of the Disclosure; or
- (e) Some other course of action.

4.3 The College will:

- (a) seek and consider the views of a Discloser before progressing a Disclosure to investigation; and
- (b) inform a Discloser that the College may investigate a Disclosure where it is necessary for the safety and wellbeing of Residents and Staff.

5. INVESTIGATION PROCESS

5.1 The College will investigate all Formal Reports where the Respondent is a Resident or Staff member of the College (Investigation). The College may investigate any Disclosure where it is necessary for the safety and wellbeing of Residents and Staff.

5.2 In determining the scope of the Investigation the College will have regard to the safety and wellbeing of all members of the College community.

5.3 The College will notify the Discloser and the Respondent in writing of the commencement of an Investigation. As far as reasonably possible, the Discloser and Respondent will be notified on the same day and the Discloser will be notified first.

5.4 The College will ensure that any party being questioned in relation to an Investigation is given the opportunity to be accompanied by a support person.

5.5 The College will not require a Discloser or Respondent to provide physical evidence relating to an alleged incident of Gender-based Violence.

6. MANAGING THE OUTCOME OF AN INVESTIGATION

- 6.1 Following an Investigation, the College will determine how to manage a Disclosure or Formal Report, which may include:
 - (a) a resolution implemented with the agreement of the Discloser and the Respondent;
 - (b) the implementation of safety measures without progressing to a disciplinary process;
 - (c) a decision not to proceed with a disciplinary process; and
 - (d) a decision to progress to a disciplinary process.
- 6.2 Once the Investigation is concluded, the College will notify the Respondent in writing of the outcome of the Investigation, including whether a disciplinary process will be commenced.
- 6.3 Unless the Discloser requests otherwise, once the Investigation is concluded the College will notify the Discloser in writing of the outcome of the Investigation, including whether a disciplinary process will be commenced. This notice will be provided on the same day as the Respondent is notified.

7. DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

- 7.1 The College will provide Respondents Procedural Fairness in the disciplinary process. Procedural Fairness has the meaning given to it in the National Code, meaning any decision is made in accordance with the rule against bias and the hearing rule (i.e. Respondent is given an opportunity to present their case with knowledge of any prejudicial material that may be taken into account by the decision maker). The Procedures detail how this will be achieved in the College context.
- 7.2 The College will impose sanctions proportionate to the conduct substantiated in the disciplinary process, which may include exclusion and expulsion.
- 7.3 Once the disciplinary process has concluded, the College must give written notice to the Respondent of:
 - (a) the outcome of the disciplinary process, including the decision, and, if relevant, sanctions to be imposed;
 - (b) reasons for the outcome; and
 - (c) rights to make an internal and/or external complaint, including to the National Student Ombudsman.
- 7.4 Unless a Discloser requests otherwise, the College must give written notice to the Discloser of:
 - (a) the outcome of the disciplinary process, including the decision, and, if relevant, sanctions to be imposed;
 - (b) reasons for the outcome; and
 - (c) rights to make an internal and/or external complaint, including to the National Student Ombudsman.

7.5 Unless requested otherwise and to the extent reasonably possible, the Discloser must be notified of the outcome of the disciplinary process on the same day as the Respondent.

8. APPEALS

8.1 A Respondent may appeal the outcome of a disciplinary process in the manner detailed in the Procedures (Appeal).

8.2 Where a Respondent commences an Appeal, the College must give written notice to the Discloser, within 2 days of the Appeal being lodged, including:

- (a) notice of the Respondent lodging an appeal of the outcome of the disciplinary process; and
- (b) information on potential outcomes of the Appeal.

8.3 Once an Appeal has been concluded, the College must give written notice to the Respondent of:

- (a) the outcome of the Appeal, including the decision and the impact on any relevant sanctions;
- (b) reasons for the outcome; and
- (c) rights to make an internal and/or external complaint.

8.4 Unless a Discloser requests otherwise, the College must give written notice to the Discloser of:

- (a) the outcome of the Appeal, including the decision and the impact on any relevant sanctions;
- (b) reasons for the outcome; and
- (c) rights to make an internal and/or external complaint.

8.5 Unless a Discloser requests otherwise, the Discloser must be notified of the outcome of the Appeal on the same day as the Respondent.

9. PROCEDURES

9.1 The College will prepare and keep current Procedures to guide the process for responding to Disclosures and Formal Report of Gender-based Violence.

9.2 Trinity will comply with the timeframes specified in the Procedures and will ensure that the Procedures are designed to allow:

- (a) Formal Reports to be finalised within 45 Business Days, including finalisation of a disciplinary process; and
- (b) Appeals to be finalised within 20 Business Days.

9.3 Trinity will only permit an extension of time for finalisation of Formal Reports or appeals where required by the particular context. The Warden (CEO) must satisfy themselves that extension are only being permitted where required.

9.4 The Procedures will provide for:

- (a) regular updates to the Discloser and the Respondent throughout the process of resolving a Formal Report, having regard to the views of Disclosers and Respondents; and
- (b) the College to keep appropriate records of all Disclosures and Formal Reports, maintaining appropriate confidentiality, and ensuring information is de-identified where used for reporting purposes.

10. SUPPORT SERVICES

- 10.1 The Residential College Wellbeing team is available to provide wellbeing support to any Resident on an as-needed basis.
- 10.2 The University of Melbourne provides a number of support services detailed here: <https://safercommunity.unimelb.edu.au/>

11. DEFINITIONS

Business Day means any day except a Saturday or a Sunday or other public holiday in Melbourne.

Discloser means a person who has shared information about their experience of Gender-based Violence.

Disclosure means the provision of information about a person's experience of Gender-based Violence to Trinity by the Discloser or another person.

Formal Report means the provision through formal reporting channels of information about their experience of Gender-based Violence by a Discloser to Trinity, which requires Trinity to consider taking steps beyond the offer and provision of support services, including (without limitation) the commencement of an investigation and/or a disciplinary process in appropriate circumstances.

Gender-based Violence means any form of physical or non physical violence, harassment, abuse or threats, based on gender, that results in, or is likely to result in, harm, coercion, control, fear or deprivation of liberty or autonomy.

National GBV Code means the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025.

Online Reporting System means the web-based system through which report of incidents of alleged Gender-based Violence may be made;

Person-centred means ensuring that the Discloser's needs and preferences are at the centre of decisions made in response to the Disclosure. The response systems, Policies and Procedures affirm the Discloser's dignity and support their healing by genuinely considering their wishes and the impact that decisions may have on them, while at all times ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the Discloser and other members of the College community.

Procedures means Trinity's Gender-based Violence Procedures setting out further detail on the procedures to prevent, manage and response to a Disclosure or Formal Report

Procedural Fairness in a decision-making context, means the decision is made in accordance with the rule against bias and the hearing rule (i.e., a Respondent is given an opportunity to present their case with knowledge of any prejudicial material that may be taken into account by the decision-maker).

Resident means a person that resides in accommodation owned or operated by the College.

Respondent means a person whom it is alleged has engaged in conduct that amounts to Gender-based Violence.

Staff means Student Accommodation Staff including pastoral care leaders, residential student advisers and equivalents employed or engaged by the College, including in a non-paid capacity.

Trauma-informed means an approach that applies the core principles of safety (physical, psychological and emotional), trust, choice, collaboration and empowerment. It should minimise the risk of re-traumatisation and promote recovery and healing to the greatest extent possible.

12. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Sexual Misconduct Procedures
- Residential College Code of Conduct

13. POLICY OWNER

The Dean of the Residential College is responsible for the development, compliance monitoring and review of this Policy and any associated procedures or guidelines.

14. REVIEW

The Initial Review of this Policy is due by the date 12 months after the date of approval of the Policy.

15. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1.0	Board	3 December 2025	1 January 2026	New policy

Appendix A:

Information on the factors that drive and contribute to Gender-based Violence, including factors specific to Trinity College.

See below extract from the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 (Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services) 2022) outlining four drivers of violence against women (**National Plan**). These drivers were originally sourced from Our Watch (2021) Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia (2nd ed), Melbourne Australia. The four drivers identified are:

1. Condoning of violence against women.
2. Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life.
3. Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity.
4. Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.

The National Plan acknowledges that LGBTIQA+ populations are impacted by gendered violence and states that all genders are including in the National Plan.

Factor's specific to Trinity's Residential College

Higher education, including student accommodation, has been identified as a setting where Gender-based Violence occurs. Students in student accommodation are often transitioning into adulthood, establishing long-term values, attitudes and behaviours that shape their future relationships and workplaces.

Factors specific to the student accommodation setting include:

1. The Residential College brings together 17 to 24 year olds, many of whom have never lived away from home. As young adults Residents are entitled to independence, but the transition from parental oversight to the College environment can exacerbate the risk in a student accommodation setting
2. Residents are from a broad range of backgrounds and bring with them embedded views and cultures of their families, communities, schools and social lives.
3. In a close living setting, power dynamics among young people living out of home for the first time may contribute to Gender-Based Violence.
4. Shared living space and proximity (including shared bathrooms) can exacerbate risk, providing the opportunity for Gender-based Violence to occur unobserved.
5. College social events, and the presence of alcohol, may contribute to Gender-based Violence
6. The years at College can be a time of social and sexual experimentation with young people determining their identity and testing their values.
7. The prevalence of social media and the ever evolving ways in which social media is used and influences views on masculinity and misogyny can disrupt positive messaging by the College, and also influence what a Resident sees as being required to 'fit-in'.

Violence against women is serious, prevalent and driven by gender inequality

Gendered drivers of violence against women as outlined in Our Watch's *Change the Story*

DRIVER 1

Condoning of violence against women

DRIVER 2

Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life

DRIVER 3

Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity

DRIVER 4

Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control

Underlying social context for violence against women

Social context

Gender inequality and other forms of oppression such as racism, ableism, ageism, classism, cissexism and heteronormativity

Factors that reinforce violence against women

REINFORCING

Factor 1

Condoning of violence in general

REINFORCING

Factor 2

Experience of, and exposure to, violence

REINFORCING

Factor 3

Factors that weaken prosocial behaviour such as, but not limited to, neighbourhood level poverty, natural disasters, alcohol and gambling

REINFORCING

Factor 4

Resistance and backlash to prevention and gender equality efforts

These drivers and reinforcing factors play out at every level of society: from individual attitudes and behaviours, to social norms, organisational cultures and practices, policies, laws, and institutions.

Source: Our Watch. (2021). *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia* (2nd ed.). Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.