

Background

- Sexual violence is unfortunately prevalent at UK Universities and has a detrimental impact on the student experience. Action in this area has started to take place in the last decade.
- Research at The University (including the I Heart Consent Campaign evaluation 2015-2017, the HEFCE/OfS funded New Spaces Project 2017-2018 and ongoing work by the Consent Campaign Planning Group 2018- current) has informed guidelines set by the OfS, as well as the implementation of a range of new policies, procedures, processes and prevention campaigns.
- This included new supporting and reporting options, resources; dedicated student and staff webpages; three reporting options and expanded reporting routes; 2 new staff and student policies, staff disclosure training; trained Sexual Violence Liaison Officers (SVLOs), links to external organisations (e.g. Serenity, Rape Crisis) and partnership working with the University and UoN Police, a #neverok consent campaign and other work.
- Please see: www.northampton.ac.uk/never-ok.

Research Aim

- This student-led Undergraduate Bursaries at Northampton (URB@N) project aimed to increase the student voice by evaluating student perceptions of these new policies, Support and Report resources and related procedures.
- This project also aimed to work with the Consent Campaign Planning Group to ensure research findings enhance the ongoing work in this area, as well as the upcoming campaigns in this area.



Figure 1:
Examples of some of the resources evaluated by students in the focus groups

Methods

- University of Northampton students were recruited through opportunity sampling. One focus group has already taken place and one more focus group has been scheduled.
- Students were guided through University resources in this area on laptops and asked to comment on aspects such as accessibility, visibility and usefulness, as well as discussing and providing recommendations for improvement.
- The transcripts from the focus groups are being analysed using Thematic Analysis to establish key themes and findings will provide key recommendations.

Results

- Student feedback on these resources was overwhelmingly positive.
- Students believe that the topic of sexual violence, assault and consent are not talked about enough at university.
- Feedback was given on previous campaigns and ideas were shared for future campaigns.
- Students agreed more needs to be done to highlight the work done in this area. For example, leaflets, displays on screens across the university, shown before lectures.
- Students would like to continue to be involved in these important and valuable ways to tackle these issues.

Conclusions

Implications for future research, as well as for existing sexual violence report and support, processes, policies and prevention campaigns will be provided from this research. This will include wider recommendations for the Higher Education sector in taking action against these issues.

References

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- Crofts, M., Hill, K.M., Prokopiou, E., Barrick, R., Callaghan, J., & Armstrong-Hallam, S. (2018). *New Spaces: Safeguarding Students from Violence and Hate*. Report produced for the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).