



# Creating Conversations about Consent:

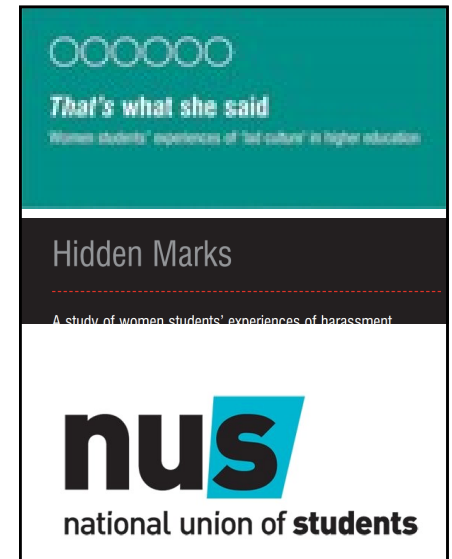
**Changing the Culture and Tackling Sexual Violence  
at UK Universities**

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# Sexual Violence and Harassment

- Universities significant sites for action, limited UK work/ profile.
- NUS “Hidden Marks” survey (2014): 68% students subjected to sexual violence.
- UUK task force & Zellick report update: some positive activity, action required.
- Challenges remain:
  - HE cuts, support services centralised and other priorities.
  - Duty of care vs. HE self-preservation/ reputation.
  - Sessions often added-on, poorly attended or not evaluated.



# Consent Week of Action (2015-2019)

- Curricula embedded events incl:
  - Power and Control, the Law, student perspectives, Consent and the LGBTQ+ Community, Alcohol, Psychological Impact, links to external agencies...
- Focus on feedback/ evaluating impact
- Excellent staff and student feedback.
- Challenges: whole campus approach, resourcing attendance, timetabling.
- Important: awareness raising increases disclosure, but existing processes limited and prevalence unknown.



# Key Findings

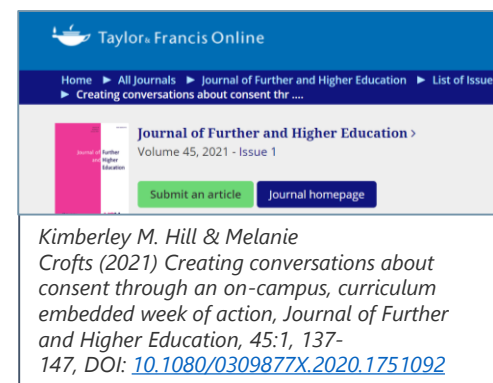
- 25.73% of students in our research had experienced unwelcome sexual advances, unwanted sexual touching or groping.
- 60.82% witnessed this happening to others.
- 64.91% did not know where to seek advice.
- Hierarchy of severity & barriers to disclosure:
  - Self-management, stigma, safety concerns, limited faith in existing reporting mechanisms and the normative nature of sexual violence within UK HEIs.
- Successful HEFCE and OfS Catalyst funding bid.

*“May be down to something I did”*

*“I’d become a target”*

*“Not being believed”*

*“No point as nothing will be done”*



The screenshot shows the Taylor & Francis Online interface. At the top, there's a blue navigation bar with the Taylor & Francis logo and the text 'Taylor & Francis Online'. Below this is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > All Journals > Journal of Further and Higher Education > List of Issues > Creating conversations about consent thr ...'. The main content area features the journal title 'Journal of Further and Higher Education >' and 'Volume 45, 2021 - Issue 1'. There are two buttons: 'Submit an article' (green) and 'Journal homepage' (blue). Below the journal information, the article details are listed: 'Kimberley M. Hill & Melanie Crofts (2021) Creating conversations about consent through an on-campus, curriculum embedded week of action, Journal of Further and Higher Education, 45:1, 137-147, DOI: [10.1080/0309877X.2020.1751092](https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2020.1751092)'.

# New Spaces

- Partnership working: students, staff and external organisations.
- Triangulated views: students, professional services and academic staff, as well as university managers.
- Creative visual methods: photo-elicitation, focus groups, interviews.
- Evaluated existing university policies and procedures, including staff training and student support.
- Anonymous police data of reported incidents.
- Transition to new Waterside campus: participants reflected on space implications, campus design.

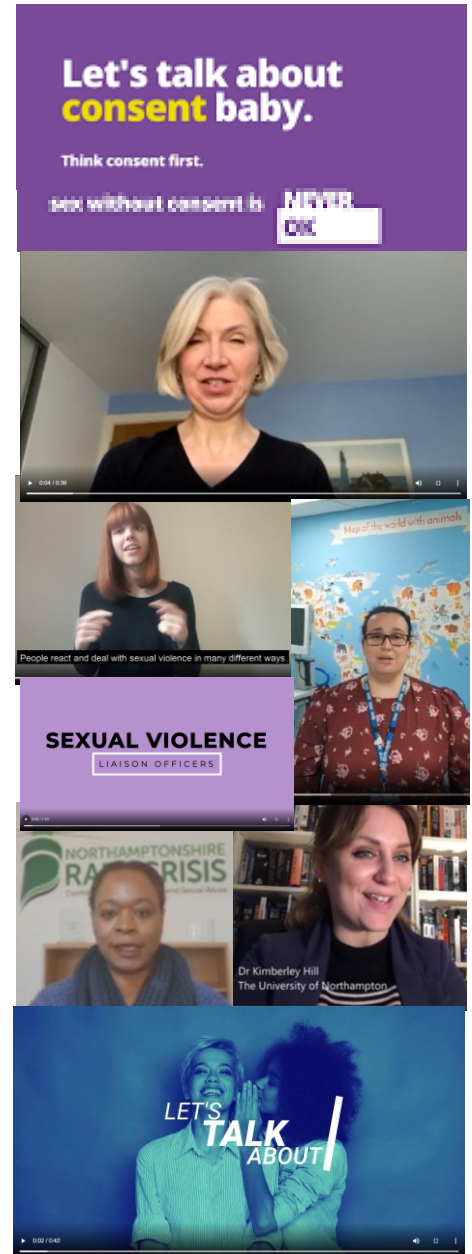


# Key Findings

1. Perceptions of prevalence and existing practices:
  - a) Limited knowledge of prevalence, problematic normative beliefs and blurring of responsibilities.
  - b) Limited policies and procedures to deal with high rates of disclosure.
  
2. Safe New Spaces:
  - a) Conceptions of space and safety tied into campus space.
  - b) Key environmental features enhanced safety conceptions.
  
3. Recommendations for practice:
  - a) Information, processes and legal implications.
  - b) Staffing and resources.
  - c) Whole campus approach required to build a culture of respect.

# Impact

- New UoN staff and student sexual violence policies, dedicated websites and branding.
- Staff e-training, student & staff resources.
- Collaborative #NeverOk campaign and evaluation.
- Three new reporting options and SVLOs.
- Final report included 33 recommendations
- Project contributed to HEFCE, OfS and Parliamentary reports, as well as Parliamentary inquiries.
- More needs to be done: work ongoing.



# Concluding Points

- Widespread and complex issue in HE.
- Inter-disciplinary, whole-campus and partnership working required in changing HE contexts.
- Changing the culture challenging, requires ongoing awareness raising, plus accurate prevalence data, policies, processes and disclosure signposting.
- Student voice essential, while working to overcome barriers and evaluate ongoing impact.
- Sharing best practice important, but changes should be governed and implemented on a global scale.
- Ongoing work to disseminate findings and impact.



# Key Resources and References

- [Sexual violence and harassment support at UoN](#)
- [UoN #NeverOk Campaign](#)
- [Contact UoN Sexual Violence Liaison Officers](#)
- [UoN Staff E-Learning: Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence NILE site](#)
- [Office for Students Recommendations](#)
- [UK Parliament Report on Sexual Harassment in Education](#)

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).

Hill, K.M., Jones, E., Dobrinska, K., & Cartwright, N. (2019) “*Consent seems to have been lost somewhere in the picture*”: A cross-disciplinary investigation of gamification for teaching consent within Higher Education settings. Report produced for The Institute of Learning and Teaching.

Hill, K.M. & Crofts, M. (2021) Creating conversations about consent through an on-campus, curriculum embedded week of action, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 45(1), pp. 137-147.

Hill, K.M. & Crofts, M. (forthcoming) Sexual Violence: Challenges in Changing Campus Culture. In: *Sexual misconduct in everyday academic spaces – experience and ethical dilemmas*.



# Thank You - Questions?

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