ACTIVE* CONSENT

Union of Students in Ireland
Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn

SEXUAL EXPERIENCES SURVEY 2020

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT EXPERIENCES IN A NATIONAL SURVEY OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS.

NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

Contents

THE SEXUAL EXPERIENCES SURVEY

LORRAINE BURKE, SIOBHÁN O'HIGGINS, CHARLOTTE MCIVOR, KATE DAWSON, RÓISÍN O'DONOVAN & PÁDRAIG MACNEELA. (2020).

THE ACTIVE* CONSENT / UNION OF STUDENTS IN IRELAND SEXUAL EXPERIENCES SURVEY 2020:
SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT EXPERIENCES IN A NATIONAL SURVEY OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Funder Information

Lifes2good Foundation (L2g) is a Galway-based charity with a primary focus on women and children experiencing vulnerability. It funds preventative as well as remedial strategies, including capital projects, operational programmes and initiatives that focus on attitudinal change.

Social Innovation Fund Ireland (SIFI) is a Government-created charity using philanthropy to promote social innovation. SIFI provides growth capital and supports to the best social innovations in Ireland.

SES Report Foreword

A chairde,

The Union of Students in Ireland is built upon ensuring the student voice is heard on all matters affecting their lives - both academic and non-academic. The aim of this report is to give a platform to the voices and experiences of students across the country on the issues of sexual harassment and violence.

The Union of Students in Ireland and Active* Consent recognised the need to undertake research that would underpin students' experiences of sexual harassment and violence and the role of institutions and peers to support students if they have such experiences. The survey which ran from February to April 2020 was a space for students to give honest and raw feedback on their experiences and of the systems that are in place to support them. We are extremely grateful to each and every one of the students who shared their experiences with us as part of this research. For many, it was the first time they disclosed the information about their experiences.

The key findings of the report are clear. There is a wealth of data that provides clear recommendations for the work that needs to be completed to ensure students are safe and that institutions have structures that support students when they need them most.

There are many findings of the report that are shocking and quite upsetting. One that stood out to me from the report was that "the most common reasons for non-disclosure were the belief that it was not serious enough, that the student handled it themselves, did not want anyone to know, or felt shame and embarrassment." This shows we have a lot to so within our college communities and our society to ensure students feel supported to come forward and report any instance of sexual harassment and violence.

This report must be used to frame our future. Students must play a central role in the development of new policies, initiatives and structures within our college communities. The national student movement will continue to take action, to lobby and to fight for change for our members. We know the lived experiences, we have the data, we have the clear recommendations - now we must work together to implement them.

Lorna Fitzpatrick,
President of the Union of
Students in Ireland

Introduction

The Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) 2020 was completed by 6,026 undergraduate and postgraduate students at Irish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) during February-April 2020. The survey was a collaboration between the Active* Consent programme at NUI Galway and the Union of Students in Ireland. Content for the SES was based on the ARC3 Campus Climate Survey, a tool designed from previously validated survey tools and measures by researchers and administrators in the U.S. (Swartout et al., 2019). Students and USI representatives worked with the research team to adapt the ARC3 to the Irish context, with the aim of providing the Irish HEI sector with the first comprehensive snapshot of positive and negative student sexual health experiences grounded by internationally recognised assessment strategies.

The SES included modules on separate topics related to sexual health and violence. This report describes the findings for three of the modules, on:

- Student experiences of sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment.
- College-based education, prevention, and support strategies.

Subsequent reports will describe student responses to the remaining SES modules, including:

- Sexual consent preparedness, behavioural intentions, and attitudes.
- Personal and perceived peer bystander intervention norms.
- Female and male rape myths.
- Dating violence experiences and peer attitudes to violence.

Key Definitions

The terms *'sexual violence'*, *'sexual assault'*, *'sexual misconduct'*, and *'sexual harassment'* are used throughout this report. The terms *'sexual violence'* and *'sexual misconduct'* are used in the report to refer to non-consensual behaviour, including unwanted touching, attempted or completed penetration. Harassment is used to refer to sexist or sexual harassment, unwanted efforts to establish a sexual relationship, and harassment via electronic communication. *'Sexual misconduct'* is the term most frequently used in the ARC3 survey content, and is the term used to refer to most examples of sexual violence in this report.

The SES used behaviourally-specific questions to ask about non-consensual sexual activity. The terms *'assault'* and *'rape'* were not used in the questions. For clarity, the following definitions of these terms are taken from the Department of Education & Skills (2019) Consent Framework (p. 14-15).

The following definitions of **Rape** and **Sexual Assault** are used in Irish Legislation:

Rape under Section 2 Criminal Law (Rape) 1981 Act as amended. Absence of consent is necessary to prove this offence. Penetration of the vagina by the penis where the man either knows that the woman does not consent to sexual intercourse, or is reckless as to whether she consents or not. Proof is necessary that the penis entered the vagina, but even a very slight degree of penetration is enough.

Rape under Section 4 Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act 1990 as amended. Absence of consent is necessary to prove this offence. A sexual assault that includes: a) Penetration (however slight) of the anus or mouth by the penis. b) Penetration of the vagina (however slight) by any object held or manipulated by another person.

Aggravated Sexual Assault under Section 3 Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act 1990 as amended. Absence of consent is necessary to prove this offence. A sexual assault that includes serious violence or the threat of serious violence or is such as to cause injury, humiliation, or degradation of a grave nature to the person assaulted.

Sexual Assault under Section 2 Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act 1990 as amended. Absence of consent is necessary to prove this offence. An assault which takes place in circumstances of indecency is known as sexual assault. It includes any sexual touching without consent and is not limited to sexual touching involving penetration. Technically, the word "assault" also covers actions which put another person in fear of an assault.

The Consent Framework (2019)

The SES was carried out one year after the introduction of the 'Consent Framework' (Department of Education & Skills, 2019). Designed by an expert panel, the Framework fulfilled a request from the Minister of State for Higher Education to set out a vision for the Irish higher educational system as a safe, respectful, supportive, and positive environment with regard to sexual violence and harassment.

Irish HEIs have made an increasing commitment to preventative efforts, building on the research and implementation efforts on sexual consent that have been emerging over the past decade (e.g., USI, 2013; RCNI, 2014; SMART Consent, 2018). For the first time, the Consent Framework established a clear set of expectations for all third level education stakeholders – across institutional culture, structures and processes, initiatives for students and staff, and in research – the multiple strands necessary for a comprehensive, whole-of-campus and systemic approach to tackle sexual violence and harassment.

The Framework reflects enhanced policy development internationally, in the UK (Universities UK, 2016), Australia (UA, 2017), and the U.S. (White House Task Force, 2017). Indeed, it goes beyond other international policies in its balanced coverage of both negative and positive rights. Not alone do students have a right to be free of coercion, violence, and the fear of negative experiences. There is also a right to explore positive sexual experiences in a safe environment. These complementary perspectives are consistent with the World Health Organization (2006) definition of sexual health as:

> *A state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being related to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease … Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected, and fulfilled (p. 5).*

In this way, the Framework aligns with national health promotion policies (Healthy Ireland, 2013; National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020) as well as policy on reducing the incidence of sexual violence (Cosc, 2016).

The SES is one of a series of initiatives and contributions to a national effort given sharper focus by the Consent Framework. The Department of Education and Skills has supported HEIs to implement a number of projects in 2020-21, as well as funding work by Active* Consent, the UCC Bystander Programme, and the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI). The Irish Universities Association (2020) has recently designed new guidelines on universities' responses to alleged staff or student or university-related sexual misconduct. Following this report, the Active* Consent programme will release a Consent Strategy and Toolkit to offer practical guidelines based on our learning through the SMART Consent workshop first introduced in 2015, the consent drama *'The kinds of sex you might have at college'* premiered in 2019, and upcoming strategies.

Notwithstanding this work, addressing sexual misconduct and supporting positive sexual health will require innovations to address issues such as:

- Agreeing key data and key performance indicators to inform the sector.
- An integrated strategy for implementation of the Consent Framework that harnesses the capacity and potential of all stakeholders including senior management to work together on a sustainable basis.
- Continued development of feasible, well-supported programming and implementation with students and staff, particularly in the context of Covid-19 and the pivot to blended or online strategies.
- Involvement of students and advocates to ensure that initiatives and policies are inclusive, impactful, safe, effective, and engaging.

It is critical to reiterate the importance of a student-focused approach in the midst of references to policy development, implementation, and data collection efforts. Exposure to sexual misconduct or harassment and their aftermath can have a devastating impact on survivors, representing an unjust intrusion on their right to personal autonomy. While much of the research on sexual violence and harassment has studied the experience of girls and women, violence and harassment are unacceptable and harmful experiences for any group, including male and non-binary students (Allen, Ridgeway, & Swan, 2015; Coulter et al., 2017). Besides gender, LGBTQI+ students and students with a disability are acknowledged to have a particularly high level of exposure to misconduct and harassment (Universities Australia, 2017). There is a well developed research literature on the high incidence of exposure to sexual violence among First Year students, which impedes their successful transition into college (Carey et al., 2018). Other research has documented misconduct in relation to postgraduate students and PhD candidates (Cantor et al., 2020).

To date we have lacked baseline statistics on many of the issues identified in the Consent Framework, including the incidence of sexual violence, harassment, along with the preventative and educational initiatives taking place across the country. The Consent Framework recognised the vital role of research in achieving this understanding, as a mechanism to track changes over time and a means to study the impact of new developments that become mainstreamed in the college experience.

Sexual Violence and Harassment in a Development Context

At 17 to 20 years of age, most young adults entering college are still in an early phase of managing the use of alcohol, drugs, and how they engage in sexual intimacy. For example, the latest round of the national Health Behaviour of School Children survey in 2018 found that most children begin drinking alcohol between the ages of 15-17, the same age at which drug use emerges as a common behaviour, while 20% of girls and 28% of boys aged 15-17 report having had sexual intercourse, a figure that rises to 87% by the first year of college (Byrnes & MacNeela, 2017).

Extensive revisions are planned to the delivery of relationships and sexuality education (RSE), in recognition of the need to give greater coverage to contemporary issues such as sexual consent (NCCA, 2019). Currently, a majority of young adults begin their college experience without having had the benefit of comprehensive sexual health education and at a time of potential exposure to alcohol and drug use. These issues are thought to contribute to a 'red zone' of heightened risk among First Year students of sexual violence (Cranney, 2015).

Within the third level sector, the national Say Something survey (USI, 2012) and more recent campus-specific reports have provided insights on the experience of students in Ireland (Byrnes & MacNeela, 2017; QUB SU, 2017). The SES builds on these efforts, and for the first time introduces internationally-recognised measures of non-consensual experiences and other aspects of consent that HEIs are likely to require in a sustainable strategy on this important topic.

The SES as a Data Collection Methodology for HEIs

The SES provides a snapshot of student experiences at an early stage in the systems change required to fully respond to the Consent Framework. HEIs have lacked specialised external services in this area, yet programmes have developed recently at a number of institutions, typically through the commitment of Students' Unions and student services staff. There has been insufficient data and information available on students' experiences of this programming to date, and relatively few formal complaints of sexual violence and harassment are made to HEIs.

In the future there is potential for existing programming on consent and bystander intervention to scale up; for staff to become better prepared through information and knowledge to support students; and for enhanced reporting strategies. For instance, the web-based 'anonymous reporting' is due to become widely available from autumn 2020 led by the Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education (PCHEI), supported by the Department of Education and Skills.

The campus climate survey is another strand to the package of initiatives that have been devised internationally in this area. Anticipating greater levels of activity in educational programming in the future, it is timely at this point to introduce a campus climate survey methodology to establish a baseline on students' experiences. Incorporating the learning achieved through the SES 2020 survey, the Active* Consent programme plans to repeat the survey in 2022. This report represents an initial step to establish the methodology of ongoing college student surveys that assess sexual health experiences inclusive of both consenting and non-consenting experiences.

Measuring Sexual Violence and Harassment

The campus climate surveys that have been developed in the U.S. are the principal resource for assessing experiences of sexual violence and harassment among college students (Wood et al., 2017). These typically draw on psychometric measures previously validated in the research literature. In their review of 34 U.S. studies of campus sexual assault from 2000-15, Fedina et al. (2018) revealed variety in the use of measures, recruitment and sampling strategies, and rates of sexual assault recorded.

Extensive multi-campus surveys have now been carried out, including the AAU survey in 2015 and 2019 (Cantor et al., 2020). The researchers studied sexual assault that took place on or off campus. The latest AAU survey had a sample of over 180,000 students, with 26% of undergraduate female students describing at least one occasion of non-consensual sexual contact by force or through the inability to give consent.

The equivalent rate for men was 7%, and 23% of gender non-conforming students reported that it had happened to them. Among women in their fourth year or later in college, 39% reported sexual touching or penetration where the perpetrator used verbal coercion, incapacitation, or force. Bisexual students reported higher rates of assault than heterosexual students, and women with a disability were at greater risk than other women. In another U.S. study, 19% of female students described completed or attempted penetration during their first year of college (Carey et al., 2015)

The AAU survey found that 59% of undergraduate female students, 65% of gender

non-conforming students, and 36% of male students described at least one example of sexual harassing behaviour during their time in college. A total of 45% of these students said the behaviour had *"interfered with their academic or professional performance, limited their ability to participate in an academic programme, or created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment"* (p. 47).

The ARC3 survey employs behaviourally-specific items to assess rates of experiencing sexual misconduct or harassment. It has been extensively used across U.S. campuses. For example, 24% of University of Alaska female students reported non-consensual attempted or completed penetration in an ARC3 survey, with an equivalent of 27% at the University of Wyoming.

Survey findings based on specific behavioural questions tend to result in higher victimisation figures than surveys which ask explicitly about 'sexual assault' or 'rape'. Muehlenhard et al.'s (2017) review of sexual violence surveys of women in U.S. colleges has been influential in this regard. They note that adolescent women and those in their early 20s experience the highest risk of rape. In their conclusions they note:

- One in five women experience sexual assault during their time in college in the U.S., rising to one in four of women toward the end of college.
- There is considerable variation in definitions of sexual assault and how it is assessed by researchers. Muehlenhard et al. recommended defining it in terms of sexual penetration and sexual touching, obtained by force (or threat of force) and incapacitation. Penetration that takes place through force or incapacitation is consistent with definitions of rape, while sexual touching includes acts consistent with sexual battery or assault.
- Behaviourally-anchored measures are preferable, along with definitions of sexual assault that distinguish between non-consensual sexual touching, attempted or completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration, and taking into account the mode of perpetration, including incapacitation, force, and coercion.

Acknowledgements

The Active* Consent and USI team sincerely acknowledge the students throughout Ireland who took part in the SES. We felt privileged to have been trusted with your responses. We recognise that many of the students who took part have been affected by sexual violence or harassment, and respect their courage in describing what happened to them. In particular, we were honoured to have so many students disclose their experience for the first time.

Over 600 students wrote additional comments at the end of an already lengthy survey. These comments provided illuminating feedback on the survey experience and gave important context for the quantitative responses. We heard from students who voiced divergent perspectives on gender, sexual violence, and harassment. Some students expressed frustration on issues such as the responses they had received from colleges and peers, the perceived invisibility of males who have experienced misconduct or harassment, the blame that some students felt is unreasonably attributed to all men, and the ongoing experience that women have of normalised, casual disrespect. It was encouraging that a number of students shared positive stories of giving and receiving support, including support from college staff.

The survey team acknowledge the support of USI, particularly the Welfare Officer, Roisín O'Donovan, and the President, Lorna Fitzpatrick. The collaboration was first supported by 2018-19 USI Sabbatical Officers, including Síona Cahill (USI President) and Damien McClean (Welfare Officer). Many students and Students' Union officers kindly assisted in adapting the U.S. version of the ARC3 survey to an Irish setting. As a member of the ARC3 development group, Professor William Flack's expertise and advice was critical.

We greatly appreciated the collegiality and openness of staff in the HEIs that supported the study, who assisted us to inform students about the SES and invite them to take part. A number of additional HEIs would have been included were it not for advent of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. We wish to thank these colleges too for their willingness to engage with us.

The Active* Consent programme is supported in a four year programme of research and implementation by Lifes2good Foundation, Social Innovation Fund Ireland, and NUI Galway. The support of the funders enabled the team to invest the time required to carry out the survey, undertaken as part of the programme of work with young people and colleges, schools, and sports settings to support positive, active sexual consent.

The team wish to recognise Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor and the staff of the Higher Education unit at the Department of Education and Skills for their support. Minister O'Connor has made a critical contribution to the conditions that enabled this survey to take place and that allow the findings to resonate with a policy for action. The Consent Framework has for the first time brought together the strands needed to tackle the sexual violence and harassment experienced by many students of Irish HEIs, and to support the achievement of positive sexual health. We hope that, working together, all stakeholders will join these strands together to achieve a mutually supportive framework for long term change.

Methodology

Survey instrument

The Sexual Experiences Survey involved a cross-sectional survey of students across 14 third level institutions in the Republic of Ireland. It was conducted to address the gap in our knowledge on third level students' experiences of sexual misconduct and harassment, attitudes and understanding of consent behaviours, rape myths, bystander intentions, and perceptions and awareness of college supports. The study also aimed to introduce the campus climate survey approach to Ireland, evaluate the methodology for carrying out surveys of this kind, and establish a baseline on student experiences. Future surveys can revisit the sexual health experiences, assess trends in provision of supports to students, and evaluate progress in resource utilisation for reducing the occurrence of negative sexual experiences and associated outcomes.

The study was modelled on the ARC3 Campus Climate survey tool, which has been designed and developed extensively by the U.S. research community to assess issues of sexual violence/misconduct and harassment among college students (Swartout et al., 2018). The Active* Consent team hosted a Fulbright Scholarship visit from Professor William F. Flack (Bucknell University, Pennsylvania) to work with the research team in adapting the ARC3 to the Irish context. Professor Flack was an original member of the ARC3 survey development consortium.

From November 2019-February 2020 the ARC3 survey tool was adapted to meet the specific needs and priorities of third level students in Ireland. Initial adaptations to content included adding additional items on preparedness and practices concerning sexual consent and positive attitudes, and replacing the bystander attitude module with an alternative validated measure of bystander attitudes. In order to test the suitability of the ARC3 survey in an Irish context, consultations were carried out with a range of stakeholder groups. A number of focus groups were carried out with third level students (n=52), including minority groups such as LGBTQI+ students. Participants were provided with sections of the ARC3 survey tool and asked to review the content for relevance, clarity and inclusivity. Consultations were also carried out on an on-going basis between the Active* Consent research team and USI executive members, along with other stakeholders including Galway Rape Crisis Centre and Students' Union welfare officers from different campuses across Ireland. This process led to the adaptation of certain survey items that required cultural translation, resulting in a culturally appropriate and inclusive tool for use among third level students in Ireland.

Specific adaptations made to the survey included replacing American terminology with phrasing suitable to an Irish context and replacing gendered terms with gender neutral versions where appropriate (some items were deliberately gendered for the specific purpose of the measure e.g., Rape Myth Acceptance items). Campus and community resources and support services relevant to Irish college students were identified and updated to replace ARC3 versions. Rape crisis support professionals provided specific advice on reducing the potential stress for respondents who had previously experienced a traumatic incident of sexual harassment or violence.

The adapted survey tool was constructed as an online questionnaire using LimeSurvey software and hosted via NUI Galway secure servers. A pilot test of the online survey tool was carried out among 37 third level students from three college campuses to test the content, functionality and timing of the adapted survey questionnaire. In order to collate feedback from a diverse student population, specific efforts were made to recruit students from a number of college societies, sports clubs and study areas. The pilot study prompted a number of changes to the survey tool including item wording, order and format, as well as shortening of the survey length.

Survey components

The final SES questionnaire contained modules on demographics, possible outcome measures, alcohol and drug use indicators, perceptions of campus climate regarding sexual misconduct, campus safety, consent attitudes and practices, bystander attitudes, sexual harassment experiences, dating violence victimisation, sexual violence victimisation, peer responses, peer norms, and rape myth acceptance. This report focuses on experience of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct, students' perceptions of campus climate regarding sexual misconduct, campus

safety, peer responses, and some aspects of personal well-being. The frequency and type of sexual harassment experienced by students was measured using a modified version of nine items from the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (Fitzgerald et al., 1988, 1995) used in the ARC3 Campus Climate survey version. Three items were also included measuring virtual harassment from the AAUW Knowledge Networks Survey (Nukukji, 2011). Students experience of sexual misconduct measures were derived from the Sexual Experiences Survey Short Form Victimization (SES-SFV) (Koss & Gidycz, 1985; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Koss & Oros, 1982). This measure was adapted for this study to include a specific measure for males who were made to perform vaginal or anal penetration without their consent, in order to be inclusive of as many potential misconduct situations as possible.

Perceptions of campus climate measures were derived from the Rutgers Campus Climate Survey (Rutgers University, 2014). This measure comprised items on a number of aspects of students' experience at their college, including perception of how the college would respond to an incident of sexual misconduct, awareness of supports and reporting procedures, exposure to education and information about sexual misconduct, and familiarity with campus and community resources regarding sexual misconduct. The ARC3 survey measured campus safety using an adaptation of the Safety Subscale of The General Campus Climate Survey (Cortina, Swan, Fitzgerald, & Waldo, 1998). This measure was further adapted for this survey to focus solely on sexual misconduct experiences (excluding sexual harassment and dating violence), and expanded to include perceptions of safety at students' accommodation or when socialising at night.

Students' anticipated peer responses to a disclosure of sexual assault were measured using the ARC3 Peer Responses ten item subscale, which was adapted from the short form Social Reactions Questionnaire (Ullman & Relyea, 2015). This measure includes a sub-scale concerning 'Positive support', and another relating to 'Turning against'. The SES questionnaire included a number of indicators of student well-being. Those described in this report include self-reported health (Kaplan & Camacho, 1983), items on feelings of belonging to your college and depression and anxiety screening items. Depression and anxiety symptoms were measured using the Patient Health Questionnaire for Depression and Anxiety (PHQ-4) which includes two items for each symptom (Kroenke, Spitzer, Williams, Löwe, 2009).

Sampling and recruitment

All twenty-one USI affiliated higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Republic of Ireland were invited to take part in the study. Of these, 14 sent out the SES invite to students on their campus, consisting of 10 Institutes of Technology and four universities. The remaining HEIs had agreed, or were in the process of negotiating the invitation to take part in the study when restrictions were imposed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

HEI administrators were initially contacted by email inviting them to take part in the Sexual Experiences Survey and providing background information to the study. On agreement, college administrators then forwarded the study invite email to all students which contained a link to the online survey. Students were also invited to take part in the study through existing individual Students' Union channels on each campus. USI also advertised the study on a national level directing interested students to the survey link on their website. Once clicked, the link brought respondents to the survey welcome page where further information and advice was provided to students before initiating the actual questionnaire.

Students were guaranteed confidentiality in taking part in the survey. Both college administrators and study respondents were informed that institutional-level findings would not be reported either to the institutions themselves, or in any official publications arising from the study. Students were informed that they must be aged 18 years or older in order to take part in the survey. The survey was incentivised and students who completed the questionnaire were given the option to enter a prize draw. Respondents were assured that the email address they submitted to enter the draw could not be connected with their survey responses.

Ethical considerations

Approval for the survey was granted by the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee. Due to the sensitive and potentially triggering nature of some of the study items, extra precautions were taken in order to reduce any potential stress on the part of survey respondents. This was achieved through signposting of support services throughout the survey, along with messages of support, appreciation and encouragement. Students were also advised to download a USI support services app at the beginning of the survey that provided local level information on support resources for each HEI taking part in the survey. Students were also advised to take breaks if they found the survey overwhelming at any stage.

Response rate

Overall, 8.6% of students in 14 USI affiliated HEIs responded to the survey and 4.3% completed the entire survey. Responses were considered complete if at least 80% of the survey questions were answered, this included all items covering experience of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. The attrition in survey completion could be attributable to the comprehensive nature and length of the survey (median time to complete was 28.2 minutes), as well as the sensitive nature of the topics covered. For this reason, the total number of respondents varies slightly for items that appeared towards the end of the survey, or for those that were not mandatory.

Data cleaning and analysis

Respondents who were outside the required age criteria to take part in the survey (i.e., under 18 years, n=25) were removed from the final analytical sample of the study. A very small number of cases (n=3) were excluded due to questionable response patterns and potentially offensive comments on multiple items. This left a final analysis sample of 6,026.

Responses were exported from LimeSurvey and were analysed using SPSS version 24 (IBM Corp, 2016). For the purposes of this report, descriptive statistics were provided in the form of percentages and in some cases frequencies. Percentages reported in the text and in charts were rounded.

Sample characteristics

Of the participants who completed the SES questionnaire, 48% were students at an Institute of Technology or Institute of Further Education and Training (n=2,868), and 52% were students at a university (n=3,129). While non-USI affiliated HEIs were not directly invited to take part in the study, some students from other campuses did complete the survey (n=18 completed cases) and were included in the analytical sample. In relation to engagement in sexual behaviours[1] , 87% of respondents reported participating in oral sex; 84% reported vaginal sex; 36% reported anal sex; and 49% reported other genital stimulation or penetration.

On completion of the survey, respondents were asked about their experience of completing the survey, particularly in relation to the items around sexual misconduct. Of those who completed the survey in full, 39% reported that the survey was 'less distressing' or 'much less distressing' than other things they sometimes encounter in day to day life, while a further 40% responded neutrally.

The following tables provide frequencies and percentages for key demographic measures including age, area of study, living situation, relationship status, gender identity, year of study, sexual orientation, disability status, and ethnicity.

1. As a result of a technical error in the online survey at the early stages of recruitment, those who did not report participating in any sexual behaviour were unable to access the full survey (n=125). This was corrected on detection.

Table 1. *Frequency and percentage of respondents, by year of age.*

	Frequency	%
18 years	525	8.7
19 years	1,197	19.9
20 years	1,155	19.2
21 years	969	16.1
22 years	634	10.5
23 years	322	5.3
24 years	173	2.9
25 years	178	3.0
26-30 years	470	7.7
31-40 years	282	4.6
41-50 years	90	1.5
51+ years	31	0.5
Total	**6,026**	

For the purposes of analysis, gender identities other than male or female were recoded into one group in order to provide adequate numbers for comparison across other variables.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of respondents, by gender identity.

	Frequency	%
Female	3,928	65.2
Male	1,986	33.0
Transgender	11	0.2
Gender non-conforming	21	0.3
Non-binary	42	0.7
Other	20	0.3
Prefer not to say	18	0.3
Total	**6,026**	

When included in descriptive analysis, students identifying as gay or lesbian were grouped together, as were those who identified as queer or with another sexual orientation not covered in the other categories. This was done to provide adequate numbers for comparison across other variables. Responses provided in the open text box for the 'other' category included pansexual and demisexual.

Table 3. Frequency and percentage of respondents, by sexual orientation.

	Frequency	%
Heterosexual	4,455	73.9
Bisexual	824	13.7
Asexual	274	4.5
Gay	179	3.0
Other	104	1.7
Lesbian	73	1.2
Queer	68	1.1
Prefer not to say	49	0.8
Total	**6,026**	

For the purposes of analysis, all White Irish students were recoded into one group, as were all Black ethnicities, and also all Asian ethnicities in order to provide adequate numbers for comparison across other variables.

Table 4. Frequency and percentage of respondents, by ethnicity.

	Frequency	%
White - Irish	4,689	77.8
White - Irish Traveller	20	0.3
White - other White background	762	12.6
Black / Black Irish - African	111	1.8
Black / Black Irish - other Black background	15	0.2
Asian / Asian Irish - Chinese	62	1.0
Asian / Asian Irish - other Asian background	195	3.2
Other ethnicity	172	2.9
Total	**6,026**	

	Frequency	%
Disability	884	14.7
No disability	5,142	85.3
Total	**6,026**	

Table 5. *Frequency and percentage of respondents, by disability status.*

	Frequency	%
Not in a relationship	2,758	45.8
Exclusive relationship	3,103	51.5
Open relationship	165	2.7
Total	**6,026**	

Table 6. *Frequency and percentage of respondents, by relationship status*

	Frequency	%
Student accommodation on campus	450	7.5
Student accommodation off campus	822	13.6
Apartment/house off campus	1,585	26.3
Sharing with the owner (Digs 5/7 days)	393	6.5
Living at home	2,628	43.6
Hostel/B&B	14	0.2
Other	134	2.2
Total	**6,026**	

Table 7. *Frequency and percentage of respondents, by living situation.*

	Frequency	%
Arts and Humanities	1,556	25.8
Business	1,072	17.8
Creative Arts	448	7.4
Engineering	505	8.4
Health Sciences	656	10.9
Information Technology	519	8.6
Law	217	3.6
Science	966	16
Other	87	1.4
Total	**6,026**	

Table 8. *Frequency and percentage of respondents, by area of study.*

	Frequency	%
First year undergraduate	1,940	32.2
Second year undergraduate	1,438	23.9
Third year undergraduate	1,112	18.5
Fourth year undergraduate	840	13.9
Fifth or more undergraduate	32	0.5
Post-graduate taught	484	8.0
PhD/Masters by research	180	3.0
Total	**6,026**	

Table 9. *Frequency and percentage of respondents, by year of study.*

Definitions of Forms of Sexual Misconduct Referred to in the Report

The ARC3 survey operationalises sexual assault as follows:

Non-consensual sexual touching – Any non-consensual fondling, kissing, or rubbing up against the private areas of one's body (lips, breast/chest, crotch or bottom) or removal of one's clothes without consent.

Attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration – Any of the non-consensual acts that also involved attempted or completed sexual penetration (i.e., oral, vaginal, or anal rape).

Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration - Any of the non-consensual acts that also involved completed sexual penetration (i.e., oral, vaginal, or anal rape).

The SES added the following category to capture the potential for men to experience being made to carry out vaginal or anal penetration.

Males forced to engage in vaginal or anal intercourse – Any nonconsensual act that involved performing anal or vaginal penetration.

Perpetrator tactics when carrying out sexual assault or rape are defined through three categories:

Acts of coercion – Continually verbally pressuring the respondent after they said they did not want to continue by expressing anger or using emotional threats or criticisms (but not using physical force).

Incapacitation – Taking advantage of the respondent when they were too drunk or otherwise intoxicated to know what was happening.

Force or threat of force – Threatening to physically harm the respondent or someone close to them, or by using force (e.g., holding them down with their body weight, pinning their arms, or having a weapon).

The experience of completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration through tactics of force or threat of force, or while incapacitated and unable to give consent, most closely aligns with the definition of rape used in Ireland (Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act, 1990).

The experience of unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration by tactics of coercion, force or threat of force, or while incapacitated and unable to give consent, most closely approximate the definition of sexual assault used in Ireland (Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act, 1990).

Sexual Harassment

Forms of sexual harassment are described in the ARC3 survey using the following four definitions:

Sexist Hostility Harassment – harassment experiences specifically related the sex of the person e.g., treated differently; exposure to sexist materials; exposure to offensive sexist remarks; experience of condescension.

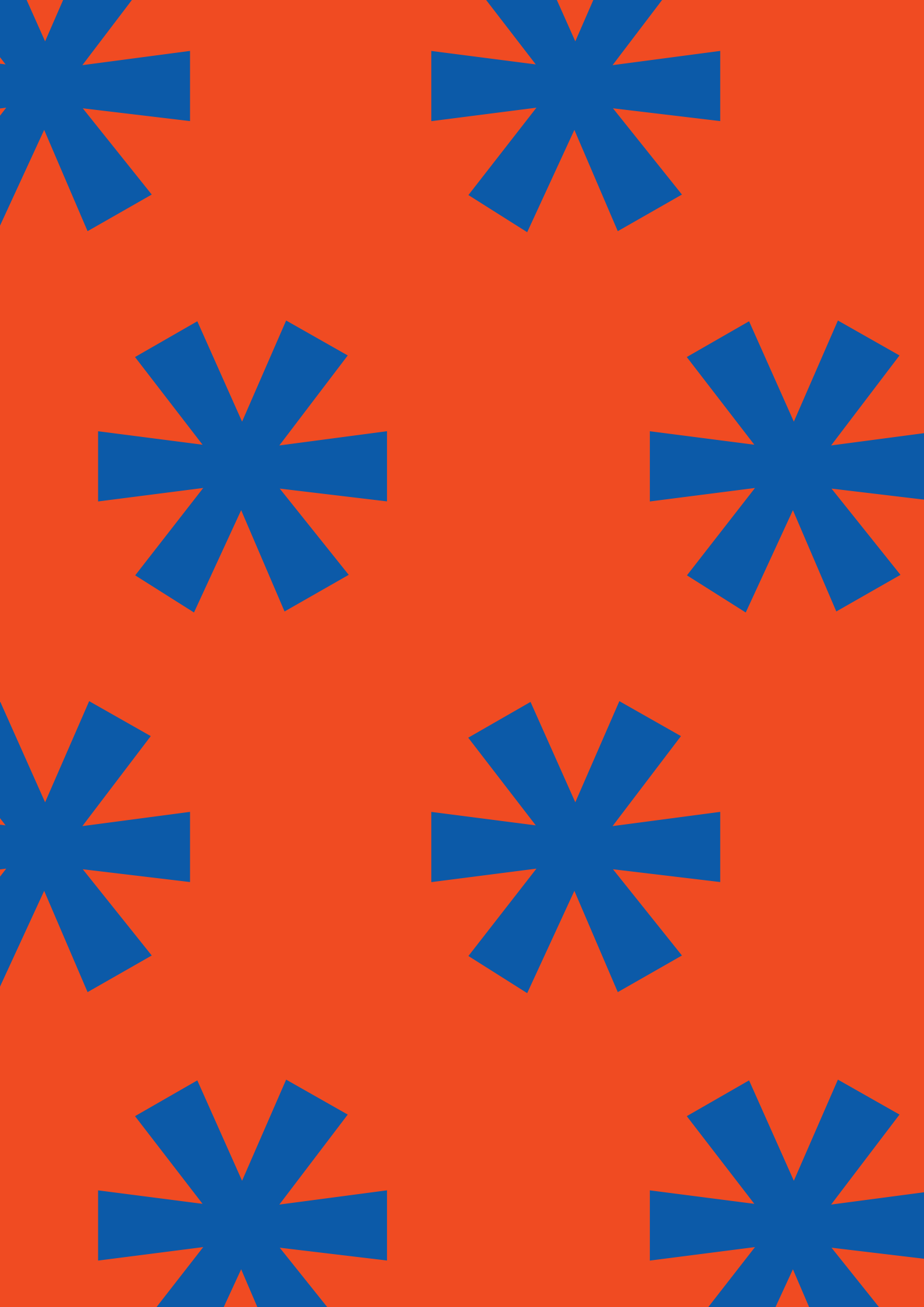
Sexual Hostility Harassment – harassment experiences of a sexual nature e.g., exposure to sexual or offensive stories or jokes; unwanted discussion of sexual matters; exposure to offensive remarks about appearance, body or sexual activities; exposure to offensive gesture or body language of a sexual nature.

Unwanted Sexual Attention – experience of unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship despite efforts to discourage it.

Sexual Harassment Via Electronic Communication – exposure to unwelcome sexual comments, jokes or pictures; unwelcome sexual rumours, or negative comments on sexual or gender identity by electronic means (text, email, Facebook etc.).

ACTIVE*
CONSENT

REPORT FINDINGS



1. Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Harassment by Gender

29% of females, 10% of males, and 28% of non-binary students reported non-consensual penetration by incapacitation, force, or threat of force.

Sexual Misconduct

This section explores student responses to the questions on experiences of sexual misconduct. The figures presented here refer to the percentage of males, females, and non-binary survey respondents who were victims of sexual misconduct since beginning college. Table 10 first presents the percentage of each group of students who reported any non-consensual contact from unwanted sexual touching, followed by completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration. The description is then narrowed to those who experienced completed penetration.

Student sample: Total	
Male	n=1,987
Female	n=3,928
Non-binary	n=87

	Overall	Male	Female	Non-binary
Unwanted sexual touching, completed or attempted penetration	43.6	26.7	51.9	49.4
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	36.3	18.7	45.1	41.4
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	27.7	12.0	35.5	32.2
Completed oral penetration		10.8	25.0	27.6
Completed vaginal penetration			25.6	16.1
Completed anal penetration		4.2	8.9	12.6

Table 10. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of sexual misconduct since beginning college.*

In the period since beginning college, around one third of females and non-binary students who took part in the survey were subjected to completed non-consensual penetration, as were one in eight male students. These figures were up to 10% higher once attempted penetration is included. Finally, around half of the female and non-binary students said they experienced sexual misconduct inclusive of any non-consensual sexual touching. The comparable figure for males was just over one quarter.

In a separate item, 7% of male students reported that they had been made to perform vaginal or anal penetration without their consent during their time in college. Male students frequently cited more than one form of perpetrator tactic in relation to this – 65% said it occurred due to coercion, 67% while incapable of giving consent, and 42% due to force or threats of force.

Table 11 describes the percentage of students exposed to different perpetrator tactics during

incidents of sexual misconduct. Students could report more than one perpetrator tactic. Four in ten females reported acts of coercion and a similar percentage described being assaulted while incapacitated. One quarter of females reported force or threat of force. Non-binary students reported similar rates to females. There was a lower rate of exposure to perpetrator tactics among males, but still ranged from 9-19%.

Table 11. *Percentage of students who described exposure to each perpetrator tactic.*

	Overall	Male	Female	Non-binary
Acts of coercion	32.4	18.5	39.1	41.4
Incapacitation	33.5	19.0	40.7	39.1
Force or threat of force	19.5	8.5	24.7	29.9

Table 12 limits the percentage of students who experienced sexual misconduct to those assaulted through force (including threat of force) or while incapacitated. Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration by these tactics most closely approximates the legal definition of rape used in Ireland. A total of 29% of women reported completed penetration while unable to give consent or when forced (or threatened with force). This figure is 8% higher when attempted penetration is considered, and by a further 10% with the inclusion of unwanted sexual touching.

Table 12. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of sexual misconduct since beginning college, by tactics of incapacitation or force (including threat of force).*

	Overall	Male	Female	Non-binary
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	38.7	21.8	47.2	44.8
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	29.3	14.2	37.0	34.5
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	22.8	9.9	29.3	27.6

Follow Up Questions on Sexual Misconduct Experiences

Student sample: Misconduct follw up	
Male	n=196
Female	n=1,148
Non-binary	n=24

Those students who indicated that they had experienced sexual misconduct subsequently answered a set of follow up questions. The follow up questions explored the context and circumstances of sexual misconduct in relation to the one situation that had the greatest impact on them. For this report, the follow up questions focus solely on students who said they had experienced completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration, through force (or threat of force) or while incapacitated and unable to give their consent.

The vast majority of female students in this category reported that the perpetrator was a man (98%), compared with 75% of non-binary students, and 31% of male students. Approximately three in ten of the survey participants said the perpetrator was a student at their college (35% of males; 29% of females; 29% of non-binary students). A small percentage said that the incident had taken place on campus (11% of males, 8% of non-binary students, 6% of females). Most of the students knew the perpetrator. Non-binary students were more likely to report the perpetrator was a stranger (38%).

Figure 1. *Percentage of students who reported the perpetrator was a student at their college.*

Figure 1.

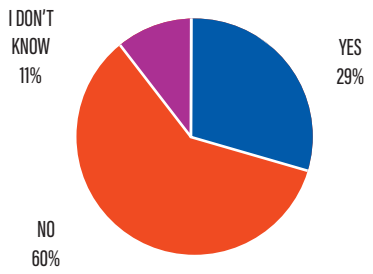


Table 13. *Relationship of the person to the perpetrator, for students who experienced penetration through tactics of incapacitation or force (including threat of force) (%).*

	Male	Female	Non-binary
Stranger	23.6	25.2	37.5
Acquaintance	25.1	25.8	16.7
Friend	22.1	17.2	4.2
Romantic partner	9.2	14.3	16.7
Former romantic partner	14.4	15.5	20.8

Alcohol and drug use were commonly associated with the incident described in student responses to the follow up questions, with alcohol use the predominant issue. Two thirds of females and 70% of males reported that the perpetrator had been using alcohol and / or drugs just prior to the incident. Three quarters of female and male students said they themselves had been using alcohol and / or drugs just prior to the incident. Responses given by non-binary students were distinctive in that a higher percentage said the perpetrator had not been using either alcohol or drugs, or that they did not know, and also in that over half said that they had been using substances themselves just prior to the incident.

	Male	Female	Non-binary
Using alcohol	50.5	48.2	20.8
Using drugs	5.2	1.1	0.0
Using alcohol and drugs	13.9	16.4	12.5
Using neither	15.5	16.9	20.8
I don't know	14.9	17.3	45.8

Table 14. *Perpetrator use of alcohol and / or drugs just prior to the incident (%).*

	Male	Female	Non-binary
Using alcohol	55.9	68.2	41.7
Using drugs	4.1	0.8	0.0
Using alcohol and drugs	13.3	5.7	4.2
Using neither	26.7	25.3	54.2

Table 15. *Use of alcohol and / or drugs by the person just prior to the incident (%).*

"... in my opinion it's a lot harder for a man to ask for help due to negative stigma around male sexual abuse victims"

Prior to taking part in the survey, one half of the male participants, two thirds of the females, and three quarters of the non-binary group had disclosed the incident to another person. Depending on their answer, participants were asked why they did not disclose or who they had disclosed to prior to the survey. Once classified into these categories the number of non-binary students is quite low, limiting generalisability of the responses. The most common reason for non-disclosure was the belief that the incident was not a crime, even though it involved non-consensual penetration. The next most common reasons were that the students handled it themselves, did not want anyone to know, and felt shame or embarrassment.

Student sample: Non-disclosure	
Male	n=96
Female	n=396
Non-binary	n=6

Figure 2.

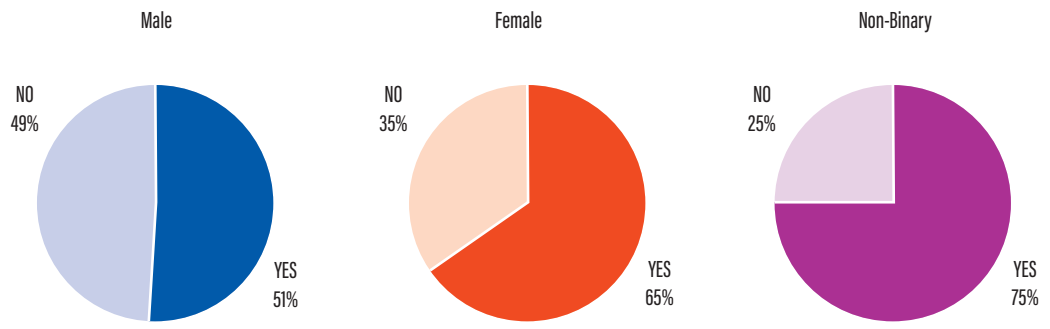


Figure 2. *Percentage of students who disclosed the incident prior to the survey.*

Table 16. *Reasons for non-disclosure of the incident to anyone (%).*

	Male	Female	Non-binary
Thought that it was not serious enough, not a crime	36.5	54.0	33.3
Handled it myself	37.5	38.1	33.3
Didn't want anyone to know	35.4	50.8	0.0
Felt shame or embarrassment	32.3	41.4	0.0
Thought that I wouldn't be believed	25.0	14.4	33.3
Thought the incident would be viewed as my fault	21.9	28.8	16.7
Didn't want the relationship to end	9.4	13.6	16.7
Didn't want involvement with the Gardaí or the courts	16.7	20.2	0.0
Didn't want the person arrested, jailed, deported, stressed out	14.6	13.6	0.0
Didn't think the Gardaí could do anything	8.3	9.8	0.0
Scared of the offender	7.3	7.3	0.0

Among those who did disclose the incident, by far the most common choice was to tell a close friend, partner or peer, followed by family members. The most common options for disclosure to professionals was to counsellors or health care workers, although fewer than 10% of male or female students chose to disclose to any one professional group included in the list. Very few students reported disclosing the incident to college staff members.

"I have definitely been in situations where the guy probably thought it was consensual, but it 100% wasn't."

Student sample: Disclosure	
Male	n=100
Female	n=752
Non-binary	n=18

Table 17. *Percentage of students who talked to peers, family, and professionals, among those students who disclosed the incident.*

	Male	Female	Non-binary
Close friend other than room mate	81.0	79.4	55.6
Romantic partner	23.0	29.1	44.4
Room mate	15.0	19.7	33.3
Parent or guardian	7.0	14.1	5.6
Other family member	9.0	9.6	0.0
Off-campus counsellor	3.0	7.2	16.7
On-campus counsellor	2.0	6.6	5.6
Doctor / nurse	6.0	6.4	11.1
Off-campus rape crisis centre staff	1.0	5.2	5.6
Garda Síochána	3.0	4.5	5.6
College health services	1.0	1.6	0.0
College faculty or staff	1.0	1.2	0.0
Students Union representative	0.0	0.9	0.0
Campus security	0.0	0.5	0.0
Religious advisor	3.0	0.4	0.0

Sexual Harassment

The sexual harassment scale comprised 12 questions, grouped into items on sexist hostility, sexual hostility, attempts to form an unwanted sexual relationship, and harassment via electronic communication. Most students described some experience of sexist and sexual hostility during the period they had been in college. Table 18 shows the percentage of each group who reported at least one experience of harassment during this time. Non-binary students were the most likely group to report harassment, with over three quarters describing some experience of sexist or sexual hostility. The percentage of female students who reported each type of harassment was 6-14% higher than the equivalent percentage of male students. Nevertheless, half or more of the male students said they had experienced sexist hostility and sexual hostility.

	Male	Female	Non-binary
Sexist hostility	61.4	69.9	82.8
Sexual hostility	50.1	61.5	75.9
Unwanted sexual relationship	27.7	42.2	36.8
Electronic communication	25.5	31.5	57.5

Table 18. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of different forms of sexual harassment since beginning college.*

Examples of sexist hostility and sexual hostility items are illustrated in the figures below. These demonstrate that most students described it as happening 'once or twice' or 'sometimes'. For example, 57% of females had experienced offensive remarks about their appearance, body, or sexual activities. This comprised 46% who chose the 'once or twice' or 'sometimes' options, and 11% who selected 'often' or 'many times'.

Figure 3.

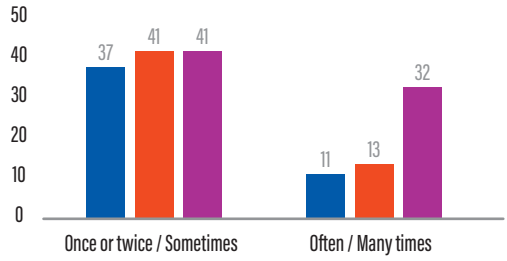


Figure 4.

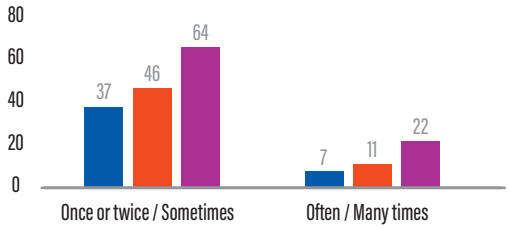
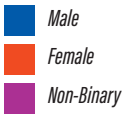


Figure 3. *Sexist hostility: Percentage of students who experienced offensive sexist remarks.*

Figure 4. *Sexual hostility: Percentage of students who experienced offensive remarks about appearance, body or sexual activities*



The next two figures illustrate the remaining categories of sexual harassment in the survey. The first relates to unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship despite the person's efforts to discourage it. More females and non-binary students reported this experience than males, including 12% of females who had this experience often or many times. Non-binary students were more likely to report harassment that used electronic media, with 10% reporting unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, or pictures often or many times.

Figure 5.

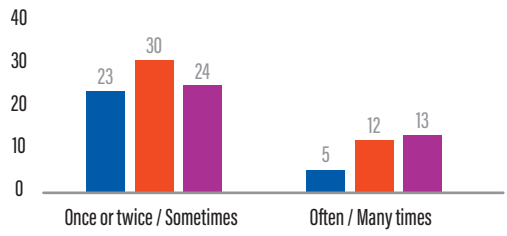


Figure 6.

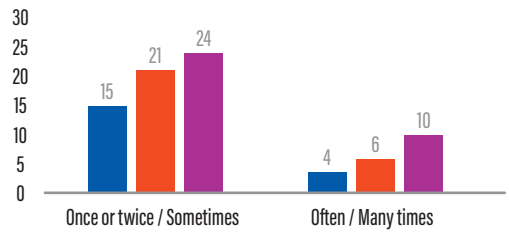
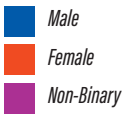


Figure 5. *Percentage of students who experienced unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship.*

Figure 6. *Harassment via electronic communication: Percentage of students who experienced unwelcome sexual comments, jokes or pictures*



Follow Up Questions on Sexual Harassment Experiences

Student sample: Harassment follow up	
Male	n=1,394
Female	n=3,040
Non-binary	n=78

Students who described experiences of harassment responded to a number of follow up questions in reference to the one situation that had the greatest effect on them. Nearly all (97%) of female students who responded to the follow up questions said the perpetrator was a man, along with 82% of non-binary students and 41% of males. The harassment incident was more likely to take place on campus than the sexual violence incident described in follow up questions. Non-binary students were the most likely to say the harassment incident happened on campus (42%), followed by females (29%), and 24% of males. A majority (60%) of the non-binary students answering the follow up questions reported that the perpetrator of the harassment was a student, compared with 51% of females and 45% of males.

Figure 7. *Percentage of students who reported the perpetrator was a student at their college.*

Figure 8. *Percentage of students who reported the harassment incident happened on campus*

Figure 7.

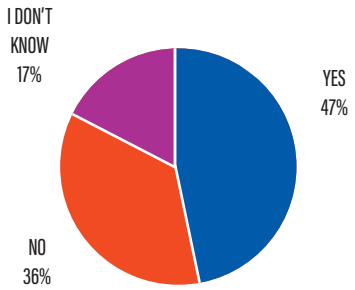
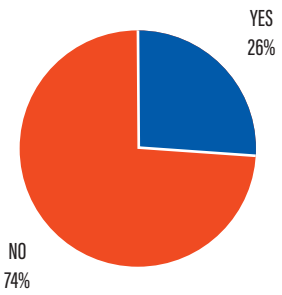


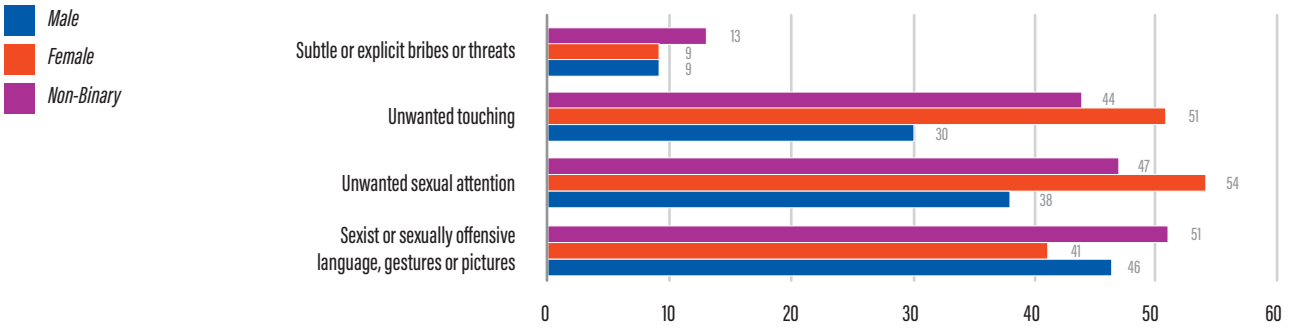
Figure 8.



The following figures describe the form that the harassment incident took and how the students reacted to it. Participants could select multiple responses on these items. The most common forms of harassment selected by females were unwanted sexual attention and unwanted touching, each of which was reported by over 50% of the females answering the follow up questions. All three groups described similar levels of exposure to bribes or threats and offensive language, gestures or pictures. The percentage of males who experienced unwanted touching or sexual attention was lower than the two other groups.

Figure 9. *The form of harassment reported by respondents in the incident (%).*

Figure 9.



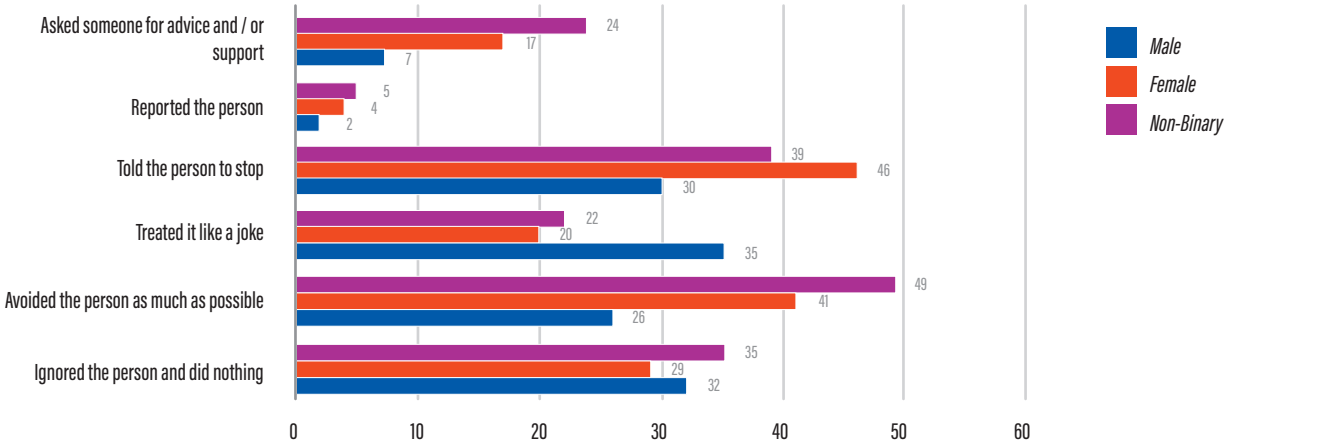
The follow up questions on the students' responses to the incident described:

- Indirect strategies – Treating the incident as a joke, ignoring it, or avoiding the person responsible.
- Active strategies – Reporting the incident, telling the person to stop, and asking for advice or help.

Very few students said they had reacted by reporting the incident, whereas about one third of each gender identity group said they had ignored the person and did nothing about the incident. Non-binary students were most likely to say they avoided the person (49%), but this group was also the most likely to say they had asked someone for help or advice (24%). The most common response among males was to treat the incident as a joke (35%), while females' most common response was to tell the person to stop (46%).

Figure 10.

Figure 10. *Reactions to the harassment incident (%)*



"Nights out are generally full of harassment from unwanted stares to dancing behind you to grabbing at you and even trying to force you to get with them or their friend "

"I had sex with someone when we'd both been drinking but I was drunk enough to be blacking out a bit...we had sex all I can remember is like okay this is happening because he put a condom on but I'm pretty sure I never said yes".

2. Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Harassment by Sexual Orientation

26% of asexual, 30% of bisexual, 19% of gay or lesbian, 21% of heterosexual, 26% of queer or other sexual orientation students reported non-consensual penetration by incapacitation, force, or threat of force.

Sexual Misconduct

Table 19 displays the percentage of students who reported any experience of sexual misconduct, organised by sexual orientation. Asexual, heterosexual, and gay or lesbian students reported broadly similar rates of each form of sexual misconduct. The rate of bisexual students describing sexual misconduct experiences was considerably higher, up to 14% greater than heterosexual or gay and lesbian students. For example, 37% of bisexual students reported non-consensual completed penetration, compared with 26% of heterosexuals. Queer / other students reported figures in the mid-range between these groups.

Student sample: Total	
Asexual	n=274
Bisexual	n=824
Gay/lesbian	n=252
Heterosexual	n=4,455
Queer/other	n=172

	Overall	Asexual	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Hetero-sexual	Queer / Other
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	43.6	43.1	55.3	42.9	41.3	47.1
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	36.3	35.4	47.9	34.1	34.2	37.8
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	27.7	29.9	36.8	24.6	25.8	30.2

Table 19. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of sexual misconduct since beginning college.*

Table 20 describes the percentage of students exposed to different perpetrator tactics. Some respondents were exposed to multiple perpetrator tactics. Bisexual students reported higher rates, particularly in relation to coercion and incapacitation. Queer / other students had the next highest rates, followed by asexual, gay and lesbian, and heterosexual students. Exposure to force or threat of force was reported at a similar level by bisexual and queer / other students. Lower rates were observed for asexual students and heterosexual students, while rates for gay and lesbian students were half those reported by bisexual and queer / other students.

	Overall	Asexual	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Hetero-sexual	Queer / Other
Acts of coercion	32.4	31.8	43.7	32.1	30.2	36.6
Incapacitation	33.5	31.8	44.8	29.0	31.6	36.6
Force or threat of force	19.5	21.2	28.6	14.3	17.6	27.9

Table 20. *Percentage of students who described exposure to each perpetrator tactic.*

Table 21 shows a similar pattern by sexual orientation once the responses are narrowed to those students who described sexual misconduct while incapacitated or forced (including threat of force). The highest rate was described by bisexual students. Queer / other students reported the next highest exposure to these experiences, followed by asexual students. While still ranging from 19-31%, gay and lesbian students had the lowest rate of exposure to sexual misconduct, with a broadly similar profile to that of heterosexual students.

Table 21. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of sexual misconduct since beginning college, by tactics of incapacitation or force (including threat of force).*

	Overall	Asexual	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Hetero-sexual	Queer / Other
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	38.7	38.7	51.1	31.3	36.6	43.6
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	29.3	30.7	39.2	25.8	27.3	33.1
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	22.8	25.9	30.3	19.4	21.1	26.2

Student sample: Misconduct follow up	
Asexual	n=71
Bisexual	n=250
Gay/lesbian	n=49
Heterosexual	n=941
Queer/other	n=45

Follow Up Questions on Sexual Misconduct Experiences

The follow up questions were answered by students in reference to the one situation that had the greatest impact on them. For this report, the figures refer solely to students who experienced completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration through force (or threat of force) or while incapacitated and unable to give their consent.

Asexual students were most likely to report that the perpetrator was a student at their college (30% said yes, 6% said they did not know), while gay and lesbian students were least likely (16% said yes, 16% said they did not know). The highest incidence of the assault taking place on campus was among asexual students (11%) and the lowest among queer or other students (5%). A large majority of students reported that the perpetrator was a man, ranging from 80-91% – lowest among asexual students and highest among queer / other students. As indicated in Table 22, gay and lesbian students were most likely to say the perpetrator was a stranger (33%) or an acquaintance (33%). Asexual students were most likely to say the perpetrator was a romantic partner (24%) or a former romantic partner (20%).

Table 22. *Relationship of the person to the perpetrator, for students who experienced penetration through tactics of incapacitation or force (including threat of force) (%).*

	Asexual	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Hetero-sexual	Queer / Other
Stranger	18.3	25.3	32.7	25.0	31.1
Acquaintance	16.9	21.7	32.7	27.1	17.8
Friend	18.3	18.9	14.3	17.5	22.2
Romantic partner	23.9	16.1	6.1	12.6	11.1
Former romantic partner	19.7	16.5	8.2	15.4	11.1

Heterosexual and queer / other students were most likely to describe the perpetrator as using alcohol and / or drugs just prior to the incident, with heterosexual students describing particularly high rates of perpetrator alcohol use. Asexual students were least likely to report perpetrator alcohol or drug use. A similar pattern was observed in relation to the students' own use of alcohol and drugs just prior to the incident. Heterosexuals were more likely to say they had been using alcohol. Gay and lesbian students reported more drug use prior to the incident, and queer / other students described greater rates of using both alcohol and drugs. Almost half of the asexual students said they had not been using alcohol or drugs, a considerably lower proportion than other groups of students.

	Asexual	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Hetero-sexual	Queer / Other
Using alcohol	42.9	42.7	37.5	50.9	44.4
Using drugs	2.9	0.4	4.2	1.8	2.2
Using alcohol and drugs	11.4	15.7	18.8	15.6	22.2
Using neither	18.6	21.0	18.8	15.6	15.6
I don't know	24.3	20.2	20.8	16.0	15.6

Table 23. *Perpetrator use of alcohol and / or drugs just prior to the incident (%).*

	Asexual	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Hetero-sexual	Queer / Other
Using alcohol	45.7	61.2	52.1	69.6	55.6
Using drugs	1.4	2.4	14.6	1.0	4.4
Using alcohol and drugs	5.7	8.0	0.0	5.9	11.1
Using neither	47.1	28.4	33.3	23.5	28.9

Table 24. *Use of alcohol and / or drugs by the person just prior to the incident (%).*

The rate of non-disclosure of the incident prior to the survey was highest among heterosexual students (38%), and lowest among bisexual (33%) and queer / other students (31%). Separate questions were presented to students depending on whether they had disclosed the incident before, resulting in relatively small sub-groups for several of the sexual orientation categories. While the generalisability of findings is more limited for these sub-groups, response trends suggest different perspectives on non-disclosure by sexual orientation. For example, bisexuals, gay and lesbian students, and queer / other students were more likely to say they did not think the incident was serious enough to disclose. Gay and lesbian students were more likely to describe shame or embarrassment. Although rates were still substantial, there was a lower percentage of heterosexual students who said they did not disclose because the incident would be viewed as their own fault, that they would not be believed, or because they wanted to avoid engagement with the Gardaí or courts.

Student sample: Non-disclosure	
Asexual	n=26
Bisexual	n=83
Gay/lesbian	n=17
Heterosexual	n=354
Queer/other	n=14

Figure 11.

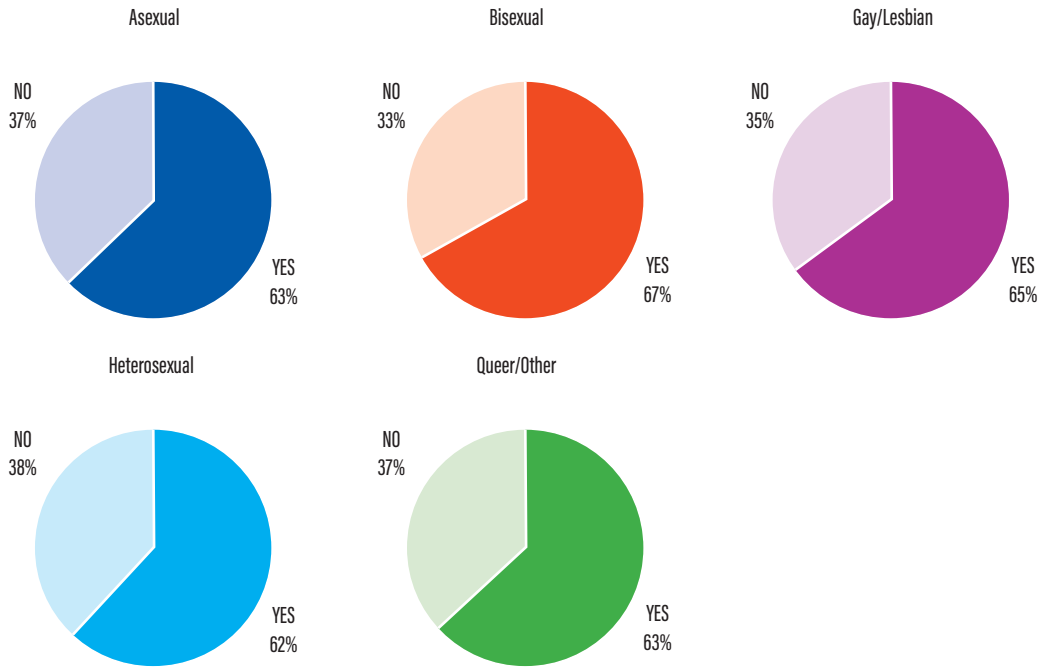


Figure 11. *Percentage of students who disclosed the incident prior to the survey.*

Table 25. *Reasons for non-disclosure of the incident to anyone (%).*

	Asexual	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Hetero-sexual	Queer / Other
I thought that it was not serious enough, not a crime	38.5	57.8	58.8	49.2	57.1
I felt shame or embarrassment	50.0	43.4	64.7	36.4	42.9
I didn't want anyone to know	34.6	50.6	52.9	48.3	35.7
I handled it myself	46.2	36.1	35.3	38.1	35.7
I thought the incident would be viewed as my fault	34.6	37.3	41.2	23.4	50.0
I didn't want involvement with the Gardaí or the courts	23.1	22.9	29.4	16.9	42.9
I thought that I wouldn't be believed	26.9	20.5	29.4	14.4	21.4
I didn't want the person arrested, jailed, deported, stressed out	15.4	26.5	5.9	10.7	21.4
I didn't want the relationship to end	19.2	19.3	17.6	11.0	0.0
I didn't think the Gardaí could do anything	11.5	14.5	17.6	8.2	14.3
I was scared of the offender	7.7	10.8	11.8	5.9	21.4

Student sample: Disclosure	
Asexual	n=45
Bisexual	n=167
Gay/lesbian	n=32
Heterosexual	n=587
Queer/other	n=31

There was also evidence of distinctive disclosure practices by sexual orientation among those students who had talked about the incident before. For example, gay and lesbian students were less likely to tell a close friend than other students, but more likely to disclose to a room mate, and had the highest rate of disclosing to the Gardaí. Bisexual students had the highest rate of disclosing to a parent or guardian, and of disclosing to professionals such as counsellors.

Table 26. *Percentage of students who talked to peers, family, and professionals, among those students who disclosed the incident.*

	Asexual	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Hetero-sexual	Queer / Other
Close friend other than room mate	75.6	80.2	68.8	79.6	77.4
Romantic partner	24.4	41.3	31.3	25.2	35.5
Room mate	17.8	13.2	31.3	19.9	35.5
Parent or guardian	8.9	20.4	12.5	11.1	16.1
Doctor / nurse	6.7	10.8	9.4	5.1	6.5
Other family member	11.1	10.2	3.1	9.5	3.2
Off-campus counsellor	6.7	12.0	3.1	5.5	9.7
Off-campus rape crisis centre staff	2.2	7.2	6.3	3.7	12.9
On-campus counsellor	2.2	7.2	0.0	6.0	12.9
Garda Síochána	4.4	4.8	9.4	4.1	0.0
College faculty or staff	2.2	1.2	0.0	0.9	6.5
College health services	0.0	2.4	0.0	1.4	3.2
Students Union representative	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.9	3.2
Religious advisor	0.0	0.6	3.1	0.7	0.0
Campus security	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.5	0.0

Sexual Harassment

Table 27 presents the percentage of students by sexual orientation who reported different forms of sexual harassment. Compared with other students, bisexual, gay and lesbian, and queer / other students described higher levels of all forms of sexual harassment.

	Asexual	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Hetero-sexual	Queer / Other
Sexist hostility	58.4	79.7	71.0	64.8	79.7
Sexual hostility	52.6	70.9	64.3	55.0	68.0
Unwanted sexual relationship	33.6	43.3	39.3	36.3	39.0
Electronic communication	27.0	38.6	45.2	27.2	41.3

Table 27. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of different forms of sexual harassment since beginning college.*

Experiences of sexist hostility and sexual hostility are illustrated by the two figures below. These items illustrate higher exposure to harassment among bisexual, gay and lesbian, and queer / other students. One in five bisexual and queer / other students reported experiencing offensive sexist remarks often or many times, and approximately 15% of students in these groups said they experienced offensive remarks about their appearance, body, or sexual activities often or many times.

Figure 12.

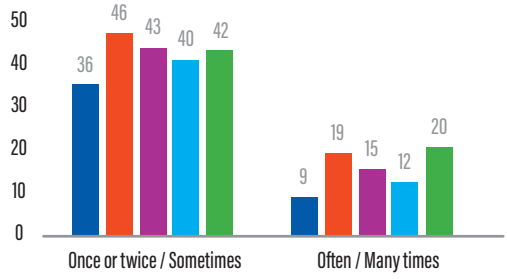


Figure 13.

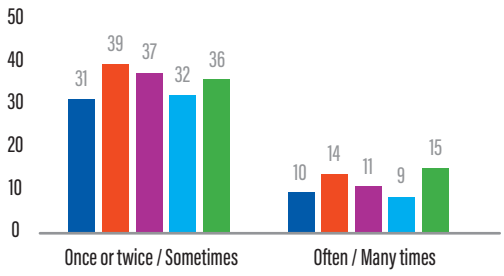


Figure 12. *Sexist hostility: Percentage of students who experienced offensive sexist remarks.*

Figure 13. *Sexual hostility: Percentage of students who experienced offensive remarks about appearance, body or sexual activities*

There was less variability in the experience of unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship despite the person's efforts to discourage it. Depending on the group, between 7-13% had this experience often or many times. A similar range was reported in relation to unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, or pictures by electronic means, with between 5-8% of students reporting this happening to them often or many times.

Figure 14.

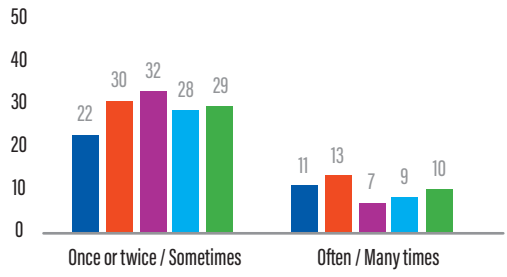


Figure 15.

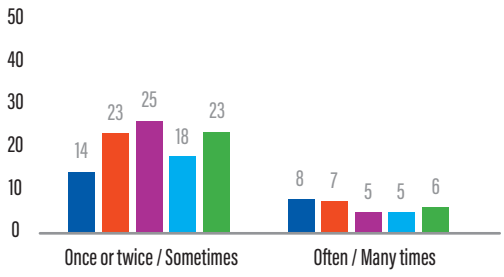


Figure 14. *Percentage of students who experienced unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship.*

Figure 15. *Harassment via electronic communication: Percentage of students who experienced unwelcome sexual comments, jokes or pictures.*

Follow Up Questions on Sexual Harassment Experiences

Student sample: Harassment follow up	
Asexual	n=188
Bisexual	n=702
Gay/lesbian	n=198
Heterosexual	n=3,260
Queer/other	n=146

In their answers to follow up questions on the one harassment situation that had the greatest effect on them, approximately half of respondents reported that the perpetrator was a student at their college, highest among queer or other sexual orientation students (52%) and lowest among heterosexual students (46%). The percentage of students who said that the incident happened on campus ranged from 21-36%, highest among gay and lesbian students. Between 76-89% of the sexual orientation groups reported that the perpetrator was a man, with bisexual respondents reporting the highest rate.

The final set of figures describe what form the harassment incident took and the person's reaction to it. Students could select multiple responses on these items. While gay and lesbian students reported lower rates of unwanted touching and sexual attention compared with other students, the incidents they described were more likely to include offensive language, gestures, or pictures. Queer / other students also reported relatively high rates of exposure to offensive language, gestures, or pictures. Queer / other students also described high rates of unwanted sexual attention, as did heterosexuals, with bisexual students most likely of all the groups to report this form of harassment. Asexual students were most likely to describe unwanted sexual touching (51%), with just under half of the bisexual students reporting that they had this experience.

Figure 16. *The form of harassment reported by respondents in the incident (%).*

Figure 16.

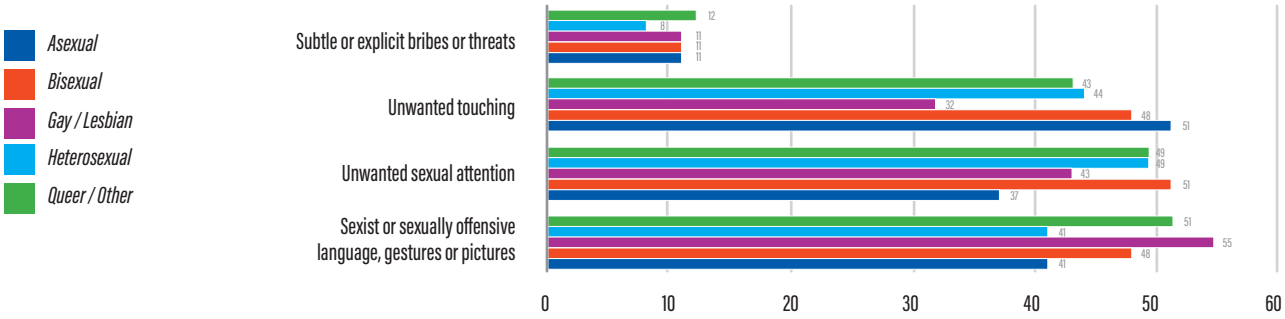
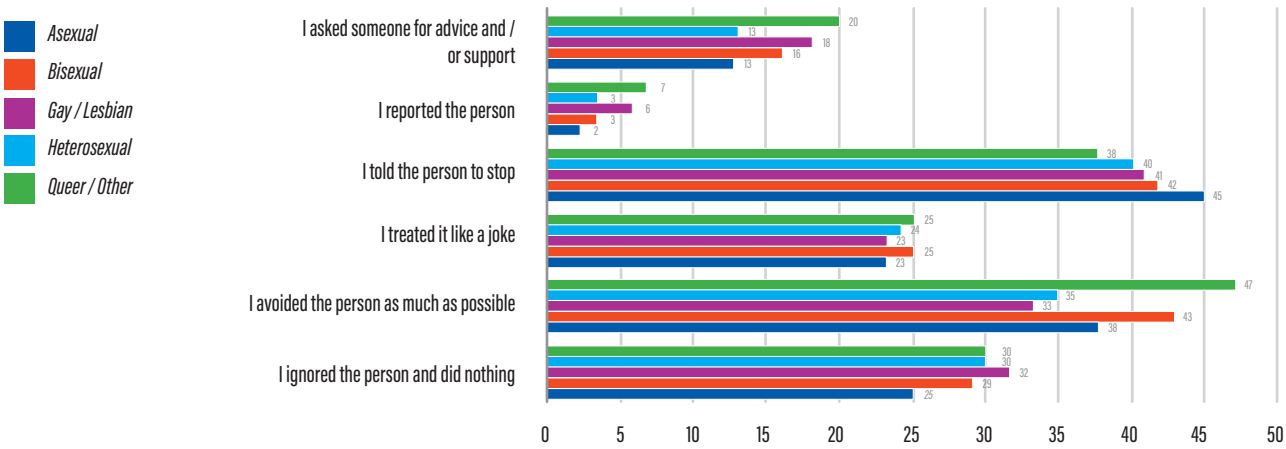


Figure 17 shows students' reactions to the incident described in follow up questions. Gay and lesbian and queer / other students were more likely to report the harassment, although the percentage reporting was still below 10%. Approximately 20% of these groups said they asked someone for advice or support, a slightly higher rate than the other sexual orientation groups. The third form of active response, telling the person to stop, was reported by broadly similar percentages of each group (38-45%). There were also similar percentages of each group who said they treated the incident like a joke (23-25%) or ignored the person and did nothing (25-32%). There was more variation in rates of avoiding the person as much as possible, ranging from 33% (gay and lesbian students) and 47% (queer / other students).

Figure 17. *Reactions to the harassment incident (%).*

Figure 17.



3. Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Harassment by Undergraduate Year of Study

19% of Year 1 students, 25% of Year 2 students, and 27% of Year 3+ students reported non-consensual penetration by incapacitation, force, or threat of force.

Sexual Misconduct

Table 28 shows the percentage of survey respondents in Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3+ (third or later year of undergraduate study) who said they had been the victims of sexual misconduct since starting college, through any perpetrator tactic. Over one third of Year 1 students reported experiencing sexual misconduct in the eight months or so since they began college. By Year 2 the percentage affected rose to almost half, with a slightly higher rate for Year 3+ students.

Student sample: Total	
Year 1	n=1,940
Year 2	n=1,438
Year 3+	n=1,984

	Overall	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	44.6	37.8	48.0	48.7
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	37.2	30.5	40.5	41.4
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	28.6	22.7	30.9	32.6

Table 28. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of sexual misconduct since beginning college.*

Table 29 shows the percentage of students in each undergraduate year exposed to different perpetrator tactics. Students could select more than one of these options. Being assaulted while incapacitated was the most common scenario for Year 1 students, with rates of experiencing coercion close behind. This pattern was also observed among Year 2 and Year 3+ student groups.

	Overall	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Acts of coercion	33.1	27.9	35.9	36.0
Incapacitation	34.5	29.1	37.0	38.1
Force or threat of force	19.9	16.2	21.6	22.3

Table 29. *Percentage of students who described exposure to each perpetrator tactic.*

The student experiences in Table 30 refer to experiences of sexual misconduct where the perpetrator tactics are limited to incapacitation and force (or threat of force). Nearly one in five Year 1 students experienced completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration while incapable of giving consent or through force (or the threat of force). This experience most closely approximates the legal definition of rape used in Ireland. The figure rose to one in four of Year 2 and Year 3+ students. Approximately one third of Year 2 and Year 3+ students described completed or attempted non-consensual penetration of this kind.

Table 30. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of sexual misconduct since beginning college, by tactics of incapacitation or force (including threat of force).*

	Overall	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	39.7	33.4	43.1	43.4
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	30.0	24.5	32.3	33.7
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	23.5	19.1	24.9	26.7

Follow Up Questions on Sexual Misconduct Experiences

Student sample: Misconduct follow up	
Year 1	n=371
Year 2	n=358
Year 3+	n=530

Those students who had experienced sexual misconduct were presented with follow up questions exploring the context and circumstances of the situation that had the greatest impact on them. This report focuses solely on follow up responses from students who experienced completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration carried out through force (or threat of force) or while incapable of giving their consent.

Figure 18. *Percentage of undergraduate students who reported that the perpetrator was a student at their college.*

There was similarity across year of college in the percentage of students who said the incident had taken place on campus (6-8%) and in the percentage who said the perpetrator of the incident was a student at their college (27% of Year 1 students said yes; 33% of Year 2 said yes; 29% of Year 3+ students said yes). The vast majority of students said that the perpetrator was a man (86-90%). Table 31 indicates that nearly three quarters of Year 1 students who experienced non-consensual penetration through incapacitation, force or threat of force knew the perpetrator. This percentage was consistent for Year 2 and Year 3+ undergraduate students, although Year 1 students were more likely to report a friend as the perpetrator while Year 2 and Year 3+ students had higher rates of identifying the perpetrator as an acquaintance.

Figure 18.

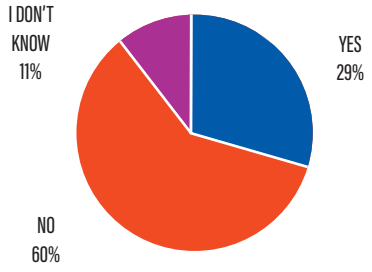


Table 31. *Relationship of the person to the perpetrator, for students who experienced penetration through tactics of incapacitation or force (including threat of force) (%).*

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Stranger	23.6	26.7	25.8
Acquaintance	22.2	26.4	26.3
Friend	22.2	16.6	15.7
Romantic partner	14.9	12.1	13.4
Former romantic partner	14.1	15.4	16.3

Overall, two-thirds of the undergraduate students described the perpetrator as using alcohol, drugs, or both. Year 1 and Year 2 undergraduate students were more likely to identify that the perpetrator had been using alcohol, while Year 3+ students reported the highest rate of the perpetrator using both alcohol and drugs. Year 1 students were the most likely to say that they had been using alcohol and / or drugs just prior to the incident, but approximately three quarters across all the undergraduate groups reported use of alcohol, drugs, or both

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Using alcohol	51.6	49.9	44.0
Using drugs	1.6	1.4	1.9
Using alcohol and drugs	14.5	15.1	18.7
Using neither	13.7	17.1	18.7
I don't know	18.6	16.5	16.8

Table 32. *Perpetrator use of alcohol and / or drugs just prior to the incident (%).*

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Using alcohol	69.5	65.3	64.1
Using drugs	1.6	0.3	2.1
Using alcohol and drugs	5.4	7.3	6.8
Using neither	23.4	27.2	26.9

Table 33. *Use of alcohol and / or drugs by the person just prior to the incident (%).*

Just over four in ten Year 1 students said they had not disclosed the incident to another person before taking part in the survey. The percentage of Year 2 students who had not disclosed was slightly lower (37%) and lowest for Year 3+ students (32%). There were some differences by year in college in the reasons given for non-disclosure. For example, Year 3+ students were more likely to say they did not want anyone to know, that they were ashamed, or did not believe the incident was serious enough to disclose.

Figure 19.

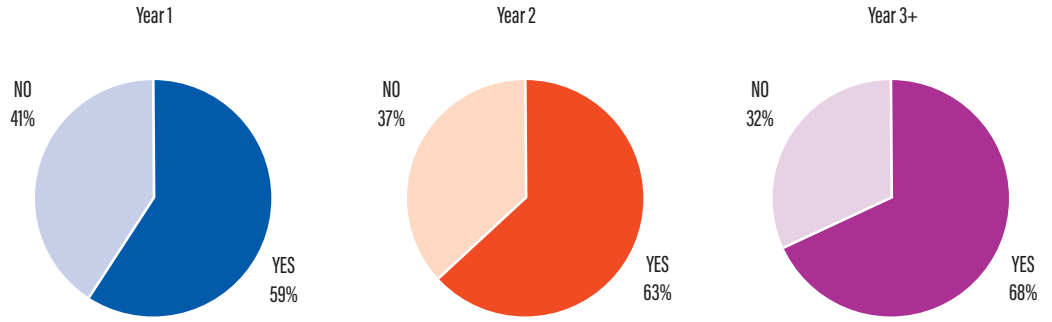


Figure 19. *Percentage of undergraduate students who disclosed the incident prior to the survey.*

Student sample: Non-disclosure	
Year 1	n=219
Year 2	n=224
Year 3+	n=360

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Thought that it was not serious enough, not a crime	46.1	53.0	53.5
Didn't want anyone to know	44.1	41.0	55.9
Felt shame or embarrassment	37.5	35.8	44.7
Handled it myself	40.1	37.3	40.0
Thought the incident would be viewed as my fault	23.7	29.9	27.6
Didn't want involvement with the Gardaí or the courts	21.1	15.7	21.2
Thought that I wouldn't be believed	15.8	17.9	13.5
Didn't want the person arrested, jailed, deported, stressed out	13.8	11.9	15.9
Didn't want the relationship to end	14.5	7.5	14.7
Didn't think the Gardaí could do anything	6.6	10.4	10.6
Scared of the offender	5.3	6.0	7.6

Table 34. *Reasons for non-disclosure of the incident to anyone (%).*

Student sample: Disclosure	
Year 1	n=152
Year 2	n=134
Year 3+	n=170

Among those undergraduates who did disclose to someone prior to the survey, close friends were by far the most common and consistent choice to share what had happened. Although rates of disclosure to the Gardaí were low overall, Year 1 students were more likely to tell the police, while Year 2 students were the most likely group to disclose to a room mate. Year 3+ students were the most likely to disclose to a romantic partner, parent, and to professionals.

"It makes me sad that my friends know it's wrong and are there for me but never know what to say so they eventually just dismiss it. Nobody encouraged me to make a report."

Table 35. *Percentage of students who talked to peers, family, and professionals, among those students who disclosed the incident.*

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Close friend other than room mate	79.9	78.1	78.3
Romantic partner	24.2	25.9	32.5
Room mate	12.8	25.4	18.9
Parent or guardian	11.4	11.2	15.0
Other family member	8.7	8.0	10.0
Off-campus counsellor	4.1	7.6	8.1
Doctor / nurse	4.6	6.3	7.5
On-campus counsellor	0.9	4.9	8.6
Garda Síochána	6.8	3.1	3.9
Off-campus rape crisis centre staff	3.2	3.1	6.7
College health services	0.0	1.3	2.8
College faculty or staff	0.0	0.0	2.8
Students Union representative	0.0	0.9	1.4
Campus security	0.5	0.4	0.6

Sexual Harassment

Student responses in Table 36 reflect an incremental exposure to each form of sexual harassment associated with year in college. Three quarters of Year 3+ students were exposed to sexist hostility since beginning college, but the exposure in Year 1 was already above 60%. Two thirds of Year 3+ students said they had experienced sexual hostility, compared with half of Year 1 students.

Table 36. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of different forms of sexual harassment since beginning college.*

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Sexist hostility	62.3	70.7	74.2
Sexual hostility	51.3	62.2	66.2
Unwanted sexual relationship	32.0	41.6	43.1
Electronic communication	23.6	32.6	36.3

Responses to individual items representing sexist hostility and sexual hostility are displayed below. By Year 3+, 17% of students said they experienced offensive sexist remarks often or many times, and 12% described experiencing offensive remarks about appearance, body, or sexual activities often or many times.

Figure 20.

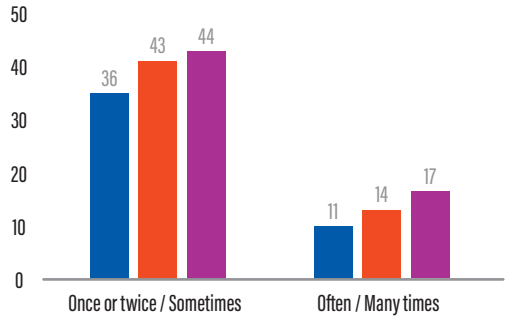


Figure 21.

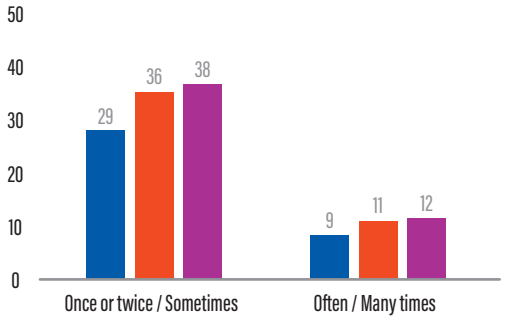


Figure 20. *Sexist hostility: Percentage of students who experienced offensive sexist remarks.*

Figure 21. *Sexual hostility: Percentage of students who experienced offensive remarks about appearance, body or sexual activities*

Nearly one quarter of Year 1 students had experienced unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship once or twice / sometimes, and a further 8% said it had happened often or many times. Among Year 3+ students, one third had unwanted attempts to establish an unwanted relationship once or twice / sometimes, and 11% said it happened often or many times. A similar pattern can be seen in responses to the item on unwelcome comments, jokes or pictures by electronic means. The percentage of students reporting this experience grew year on year, while the percentage reporting that it happened often or many times remained in single figures up to Year 3+.

Figure 22.

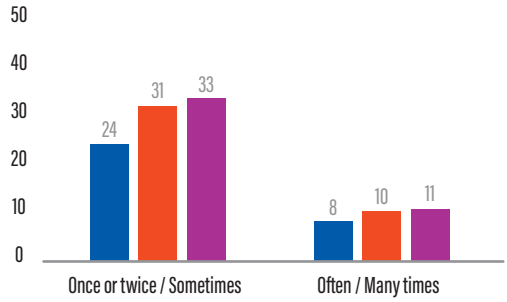


Figure 23.

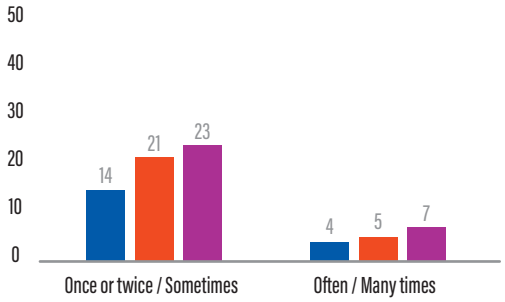


Figure 22. *Percentage of students who experienced unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship*

Figure 23. *Harassment via electronic communication: Percentage of students who experienced unwelcome sexual comments, jokes or pictures.*

Follow Up Questions on Sexual Harassment Experiences

The students who reported sexual harassment were asked follow up questions that focused on the one situation that had the greatest effect on them. Year 2 students were most likely to say that the perpetrator was a student at their college – 50% of those who answered the follow up questions, compared with 44% of Year 1 and 47% of Year 3+ students.

The percentage of undergraduate students who said this event happened on campus was consistent across year of college, ranging from 24-26% of those answering the follow up questions. There was also consistency by year of college in the percentage of students who said the perpetrator was a man, ranging from 80-82%.

Student sample: Harassment follow up	
Year 1	n=1,392
Year 2	n=1,137
Year 3+	n=1,609

Figure 24. *Percentage of students who reported the perpetrator was a student at their college.*

Figure 25. *Percentage of students who reported the harassment incident happened on campus*

Figure 24.

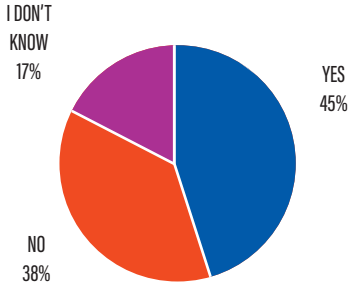
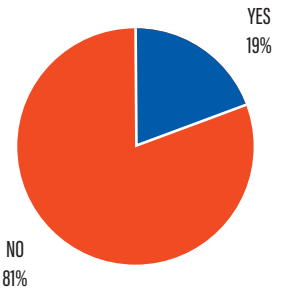


Figure 25.

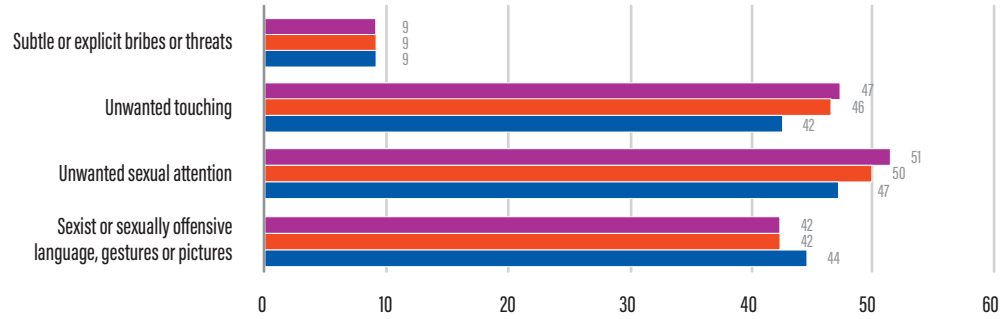


The final figures in this section describe what form the harassment incident took and the victim's responses following the incident. Respondents could select multiple responses. The percentage of students who described bribes or threats was below 10% across all undergraduate years. Over 40% of each year group answering the follow up questions described unwanted touching, sexual attention, or offensive language, gestures, or pictures. Year 3+ students recorded the highest percentage for two of these categories.

Figure 26. *The form of harassment reported by respondents in the incident (%).*

1st Year
2nd Year
3rd Year+

Figure 26.

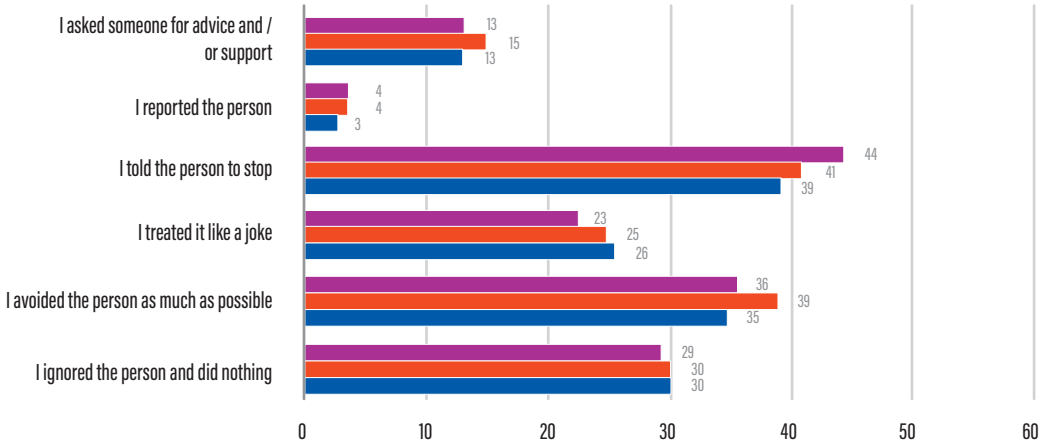


There was considerable consistency across undergraduate year groups in reactions to the incident. Year 3+ students were most likely to say they had told the person in the incident to stop, and least likely to say they treated it as a joke. Students in Year 2 or Year 3+ were no more likely than Year 1 students to say they asked for advice or reported the incident, and there was little difference by year in college in avoiding or ignoring the person who perpetrated the incident.

Figure 27. *Reactions to the harassment incident (%).*

1st Year
2nd Year
3rd Year+

Figure 27.



4. Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Harassment by Postgraduate Year of Study

16% of postgraduate taught students, 22% of postgraduate research students reported non-consensual penetration by incapacitation, force, or threat of force

Sexual Misconduct

There were comparable gender proportions for postgraduate taught (42% male; 57% female; 1% non-binary), and research students (42% male; 56% female; 2% non-binary), with a greater percentage of males in this group than with the undergraduate student group. Table 37 describes the percentage of each of postgraduate taught (PG-T) and research (PG-R) students who reported experiencing sexual misconduct since starting college, through any perpetrator tactic. Around one in five PG-T and PG-R students experienced completed non-consensual penetration since beginning college. These figures increase by 8-10% when attempted penetration is included. A third of PG-T and four in ten PG-R students were subjected to sexual misconduct inclusive of any non-consensual touching.

Student sample: Total	
PG taught	n=484
PG research	n=180

	Overall	PG taught	PG research
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	35.4	33.7	40.0
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	29.4	28.1	32.8
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	20.8	20.0	22.8

Table 37. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of sexual misconduct since beginning college*

Table 38 displays the percentage of PG students exposed to different perpetrator tactics during incidents of sexual misconduct. Some students reported more than one perpetrator tactic. There were slightly higher rates for all tactics among PG-R students. For example, 21% said they had been exposed to force or threat of force, compared with 15% of PG-T students.

	Overall	PG taught	PG research
Acts of coercion	26.8	25.6	30.0
Incapacitation	25.2	23.3	30.0
Force or threat of force	16.1	14.5	20.6

Table 38. *Percentage of students who described exposure to each perpetrator tactic.*

Table 39 focuses on PG students who experienced sexual misconduct while incapable of giving consent or through force (including threat of force). This experience of non-consensual completed penetration by these tactics most closely represents the legal definition of rape used in Ireland. PG-R students reported higher levels of exposure to each form of sexual misconduct. PG-R student exposure to these forms of misconduct were approximately 2% below the equivalent level for undergraduate students.

Table 39. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of sexual misconduct since beginning college, by tactics of incapacitation or force (including threat of force).*

	Overall	PG taught	PG research
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	30.4	27.9	37.2
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	23.3	21.7	27.8
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	17.2	15.5	21.7

Follow Up Questions on Sexual Misconduct Experiences

Student sample: Misconduct follow up	
PG taught	n=75
PG research	n=39

PG students who reported they had experienced sexual misconduct subsequently answered a set of follow up questions in relation to the situation that had the greatest impact on them. Given the size of the groups, the generalisability of findings for PG students is more limited than for undergraduate students. This section of the report concentrates solely on students who had experienced completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration, through force (or threat of force) or while unable to give their consent due to incapacitation.

Similar percentages of PG-T (87%) and PG-R students (82%) reported that the perpetrator was a man, and that the perpetrator was a student at their college (PG-T: 30%, PG-R: 29%), while 5% of both groups said the incident happened on campus. This profile is similar to undergraduate students. Rates of knowing the perpetrator were broadly similar as well, although PG-R students had the highest rate of knowing the perpetrator (80%).

Figure 28. *Percentage of students who reported the perpetrator was a student at their college*

Figure 28.

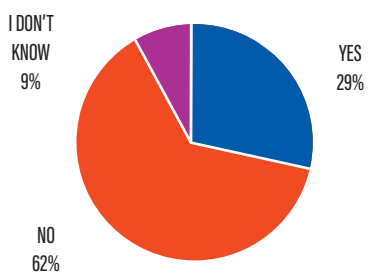


Table 40. *Relationship of the person to the perpetrator, for students who experienced penetration through tactics of incapacitation or force (including threat of force) (%).*

	PG taught	PG research
Stranger	26.7	20.5
Acquaintance	29.3	28.2
Friend	13.3	20.5
Romantic partner	17.3	10.3
Former romantic partner	13.3	17.9

Alcohol and drug use were commonly associated with the incident reported in the follow up questions. PG-T students were more likely than undergraduate students to say the perpetrator had been using alcohol and / or drugs. PG-R students were less likely to report that the perpetrator had been drinking or using drugs, but more likely to say they did not know. PG-R students were also more likely to say they had not been alcohol and / or drugs just prior to the incident.

Table 41. *Use of alcohol and / or drugs by the person just prior to the incident (%).*

	PG taught	PG research
Using alcohol	72.0	46.2
Using drugs	0.0	0.0
Using alcohol and drugs	9.3	7.7
Using neither	18.7	46.2

Almost two thirds of PG-R students and 57% of PG-T students said that they had disclosed the incident to another person prior to taking part in the survey. The students answered follow up questions based on whether they had disclosed. The responses to these items are important but the resulting group sizes are low. By far the most common reason for PG-R not to disclose was not wanting other people to know. For PG-T students, the most common reason was the belief that the incident was not serious enough.

Figure 29.

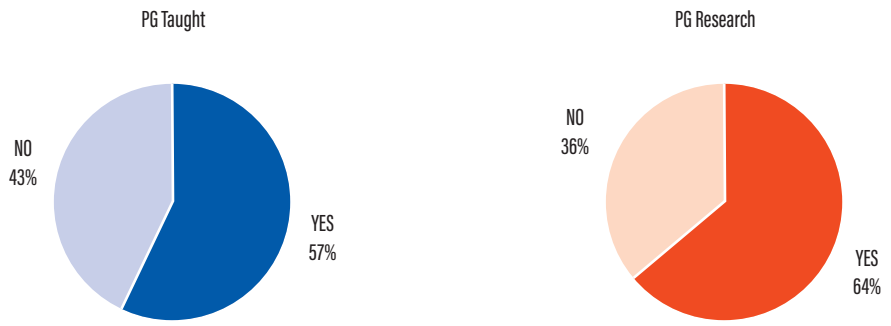


Figure 29. *Percentage of students who disclosed the incident prior to the survey.*

Student sample: Non-disclosure	
PG taught	n=32
PG research	n=14

Table 42. *Reasons for non-disclosure of the incident to anyone (%).*

	PG taught	PG research
Didn't want anyone to know	34.4	71.4
Thought that it was not serious enough, not a crime	53.1	35.7
Felt shame or embarrassment	34.4	35.7
Thought the incident would be viewed as my fault	31.3	35.7
Thought that I wouldn't be believed	21.9	42.9
Handled it myself	25.0	35.7
Didn't want involvement with the Gardaí or the courts	18.8	28.6
Scared of the offender	15.6	21.4
Didn't think the Gardaí could do anything	12.5	21.4
Didn't want the relationship to end	21.9	7.1
Didn't want the person arrested, jailed, deported, stressed out	12.5	7.1

"I believe that many students don't even think or want to believe that they were in fact sexually assaulted."

Among the postgraduate students who had disclosed the incident, by far the most common choice was to tell a close friend, followed telling by romantic partner, peers and romantic partners, and family members. None of the students in the PG groups reported disclosing the incident to college staff (counsellors, health services, faculty, security, Students' Union).

Student sample: Disclosure	
PG taught	n=43
PG research	n=25

Table 43. *Percentage of students who talked to peers, family, and professionals, among those students who disclosed the incident.*

	PG taught	PG research
Close friend other than room mate	83.7	84.0
Romantic partner	39.5	20.0
Room mate	25.6	20.0
Parent or guardian	11.6	20.0
Other family member	11.6	12.0
Doctor / nurse	2.3	16.0
Off-campus counsellor	7.0	8.0
Off-campus rape crisis centre staff	2.3	8.0
Garda Síochána	4.7	0.0
On-campus counsellor	0.0	0.0
College health services	0.0	0.0
College faculty or staff	0.0	0.0
Students Union representative	0.0	0.0
Campus security	0.0	0.0

Sexual Harassment

Table 44 describes the percentage of PG-T and PG-R students who reported different forms of sexual harassment. PG-R students reported higher exposure to all four types of harassment, from 6-18% higher than the percentages among PG-T students. Overall, PG-R students described similar rates of sexist and sexual hostility to undergraduate students, while PG-T students' rates of experienced harassment were typically somewhat lower than those reported by undergraduate students.

Table 44. *Percentage of students describing at least one experience of different forms of sexual harassment since beginning college.*

	PG taught	PG research
Sexist hostility	48.3	66.1
Sexual hostility	39.3	55.0
Unwanted sexual relationship	22.9	34.4
Electronic means	21.5	28.9

"It's the "grey area" behaviours that are the problem, and happen all the time and are just shrugged off."

Illustrations of PG student responses to individual harassment items are presented below. These items are representative of the four types of questions included in the survey. The percentage of PG-R students who reported experiencing these forms of harassment 'once or twice' or 'sometimes' ranged from 19-37%, with 6-13% of PG-R students said they happened 'often' or 'many times'. The comparable rates of PG-T were slightly lower, with 14-24% reporting an occasional experience and 4-12% reporting these experiences often or many times.

Figure 30.

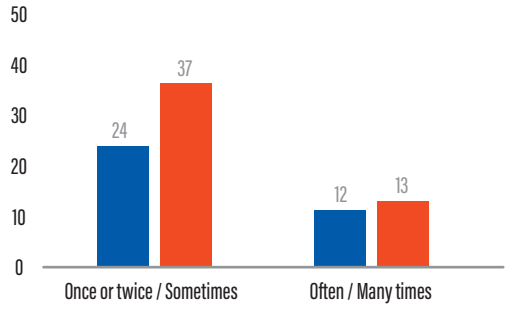


Figure 30. *Sexist hostility: Percentage of students who experienced being treated differently because of their sex.*

Figure 31.

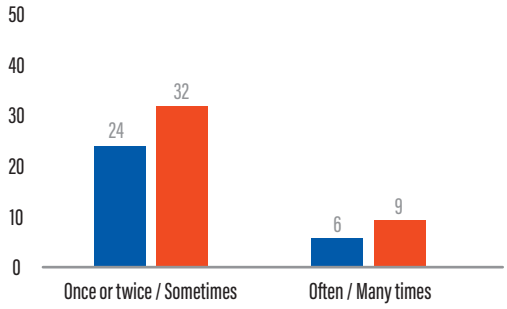


Figure 31. *Sexual hostility: Percentage of students who experienced offensive remarks about appearance, body or sexual activities.*

Figure 32.

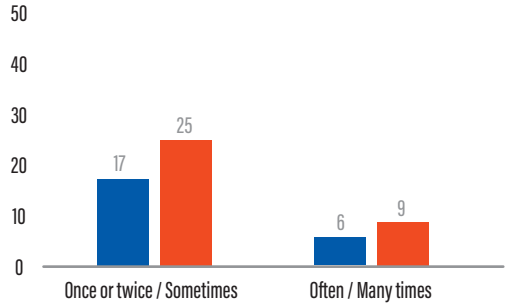


Figure 32. *Percentage of students who experienced unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship.*

Figure 33.

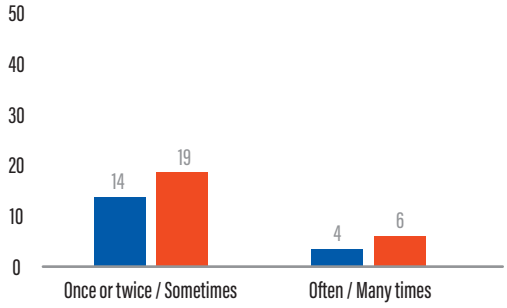


Figure 33. *Harassment via electronic communication: Percentage of students who experienced unwelcome sexual comments, jokes or pictures.*

Follow Up Questions on Sexual Harassment Experiences

The students who reported sexual harassment answered further questions that followed up on the one situation that had the greatest effect on them. Similar proportions of PG-T and PG-R students reported that the perpetrator of the incident was a student at their college (PG-T: 48%, PG-R: 47%).

Compared with undergraduate students, a higher proportion of PG students reported that the harassment had happened on the campus – 38% of PG-R students and 29% of PG-T students. Around three quarters of PG students said the perpetrator was a man (PG-T: 76%, PG-R: 73%).

Student sample: Harassment follow up	
PG taught	n=262
PG research	n=129

Figure 34.

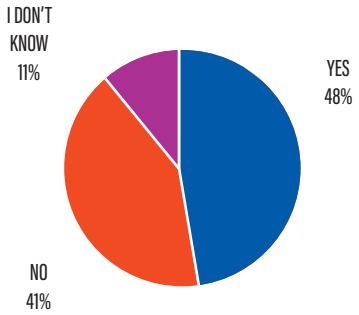


Figure 34. *Percentage of students who reported the perpetrator was a student at their college.*

Figure 35.

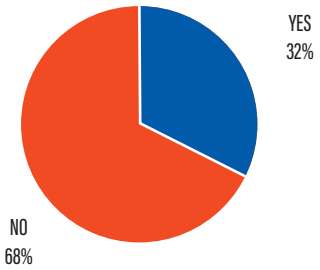
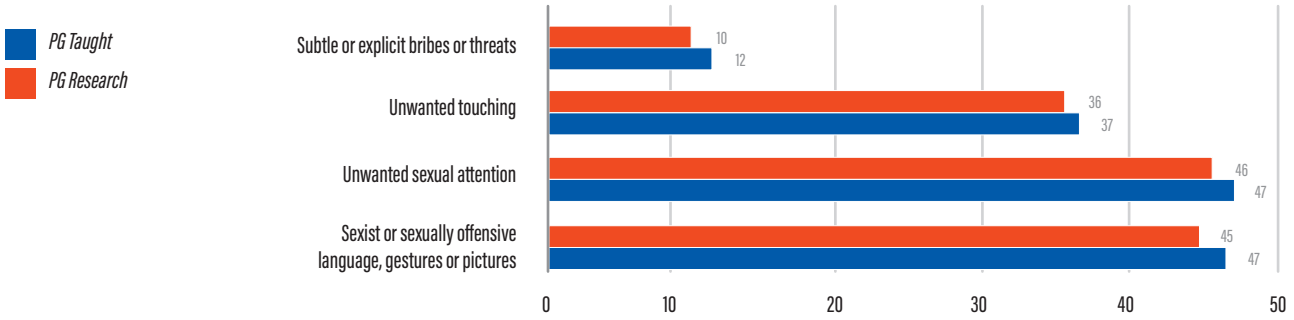


Figure 35. *Percentage of students who reported the harassment incident happened on campus*

The final set of figures illustrate the forms of harassment the incident involved and the person's reaction to it. Participants could select multiple responses on these items. The rates of forms of harassment were consistent across both PG groups. The most commonly reported forms of harassment for these groups were unwanted sexual attention (46-47%), and experience of offensive language, gestures or pictures (45%-47%).

Figure 36. *The form of harassment reported by respondents in the incident (%).*

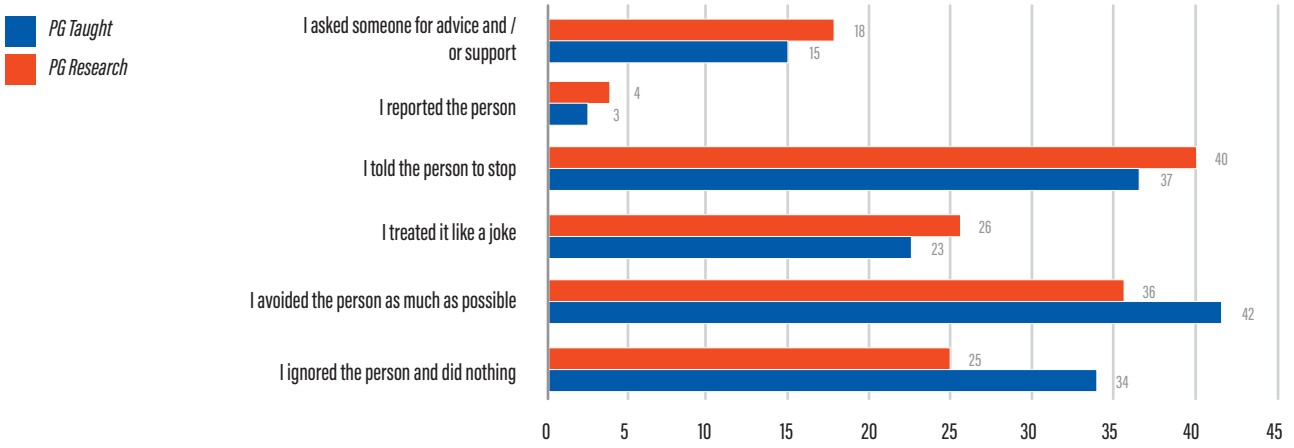
Figure 36.



There was less consistency in the reactions that students had to the incident. PG-R students were more likely to avoid the person or to ignore the person. PG-T students were more likely to ask someone for advice or support or tell the person to stop. Similar proportions said they would treat the incident like a joke, and less than 5% reported the incident.

Figure 37. *Reactions to the harassment incident (%)*

Figure 37.



5. Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Harassment among additional groups

Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Harassment by Disability

The campus climate survey methodology can be used to support inclusive measurement and monitoring of a range of groups in the college community. Following on from the previous sections on gender, sexual orientation, undergraduate and postgraduate students, this section summarises SES findings on students' experiences in terms of:

- Disability.
- Relationship status.
- Universities and Institutes of Technology.
- Ethnicity.

Table 45 summarises the core measures used in previous sections, now applied to explore the experience of students with a disability (14.7% of the sample). Compared with students who did not have a disability, students with a disability reported consistently higher rates of negative experiences across all measures. These figures ranged from 12-14% higher for sexual misconduct items and 6-13% higher for sexual harassment items.

Over half of students with a disability reported an experience of sexual misconduct by any tactic (56%), compared with 42% of other students. One third of students with a disability reported non-consensual penetration while unable to give consent or when forced (or threatened with force), compared with one in five of the other students. This includes 40% of females with a disability who reported completed non-consensual penetration, compared with 27% of females who did not have a disability.

Of the four forms of sexual harassment included in the SES, students with a disability were most likely to report sexist hostility (77%). A comparable percentage experienced sexual hostility, while approximately four in ten experienced attempts to establish an unwanted sexual relationship and harassment using electronic forms of communication.

Student sample: Total	
Disability	n=884
No disability	n=5,142

Experience of sexual misconduct (by any perpetrator tactic)	Students with a Disability	Other Students
Unwanted sexual touching, completed or attempted penetration	55.7	41.5
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	48.4	34.2
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	38.8	25.8
Exposure to each perpetrator tactic		
Acts of coercion	44.5	30.3
Incapacitation	43.6	31.8
Force or threat of force	31.8	17.3
Experience of sexual misconduct, through incapacitation or force (or threat of force)		
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	51.0	36.6
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	40.8	27.3
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	33.4	21.0
Experience of different forms of sexual harassment		
Sexist hostility	76.5	65.6
Sexual hostility	69.0	56.0
Unwanted sexual relationship	42.0	36.5
Electronic communication	39.5	28.3

Table 45. *Percentage of students with a disability who described (a) any sexual misconduct, (b) exposure to different perpetrator tactics, (c) sexual misconduct arising from incapacitation or force, and (d) sexual harassment since beginning college.*

Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Harassment by Relationship Status

Student sample: Total	
Single	n=2,758
Exclusive relationship	n=3,103

Table 46 presents the findings on core measures of negative experiences by relationship status, namely those students who were single and students in an exclusive relationship at the time of the SES. Overall, students not in a relationship reported higher rates across all key measures of sexual misconduct and harassment, ranging from 2-6% higher than students in an exclusive relationship. For example, 25% of single students reported experiencing completed penetration through force or threat of force, or while incapacitated, compared with 20% of students in a relationship. This trend continued into experiences of each form of sexual harassment measured in the survey.

"I think a big reason that I never hear being mentioned is the pressure on young men to be seen pulling women on nights out and to constantly have girlfriends."

Table 46. Percentage of single students and those in an exclusive relationship who described (a) any sexual misconduct, (b) exposure to different perpetrator tactics, (c) sexual misconduct arising from incapacitation or force, and (d) sexual harassment since beginning college.

Experience of sexual misconduct	Single Students	Students in a Relationship
Unwanted sexual touching, completed or attempted penetration	46.1	40.8
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	39.1	33.4
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	29.8	25.5
Exposure to each perpetrator tactic		
Acts of coercion	34.2	30.1
Incapacitation	36.4	30.5
Force or threat of force	20.3	18.5
Experience of sexual misconduct, through incapacitation or force (or threat of force)		
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	41.2	36.1
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	31.8	26.8
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	25.2	20.5
Experience of different forms of sexual harassment		
Sexist hostility	69.8	64.6
Sexual hostility	61.0	54.8
Unwanted sexual relationship	39.5	35.0
Electronic communication	32.8	26.9

Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Harassment by Type of HEI

> "I don't think it's a college problem, it's a culture problem."

Table 47 describes the experiences of students attending an Institute of Technology or Institute of Further Education (IoT / IFET) compared with those attending a university. The university students reported slightly higher levels across all sexual misconduct measures. This extended to each gender group, whereby males, females, and non-binary students in university reported higher rates than their counterparts in IoT / IFET.

For example, 42% of university students reported any experience of sexual misconduct while incapacitated or through tactics of force (or threat of force), compared with 35% of IoT / IFET students. Students attending universities were also more likely to experience each form of sexual harassment, with rates 2-10% higher than those in IoT / IFET. The most common form of harassment experienced by university students was sexist hostility, where there was the greatest gap compared with IoT / IFET (72% compared with 62%).

Student sample: Total	
IoT / IFET	n=2,868
University	n=3,129

Experience of sexual misconduct	IoT / IFET	University
Unwanted sexual touching, completed or attempted penetration	41.2	45.6
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	34.0	38.4
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	26.2	29.1
Exposure to each perpetrator tactic		
Acts of coercion	31.8	32.8
Incapacitation	30.9	35.8
Force or threat of force	18.5	20.3
Experience of sexual misconduct, through incapacitation or force (or threat of force)		
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	35.4	41.7
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	26.6	31.7
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	21.0	24.4
Experience of different forms of sexual harassment		
Sexist hostility	62.0	72.1
Sexual hostility	53.9	61.7
Unwanted sexual relationship	32.3	41.9
Electronic communication	28.8	30.9

Table 47. *Percentage of students by type of HEI who described (a) any sexual misconduct, (b) exposure to different perpetrator tactics, (c) sexual misconduct arising from incapacitation or force, and (d) sexual harassment since beginning college.*

Experiences of Sexual Misconduct and Harassment by Ethnicity

Student sample: Total	
White - Irish	n=4,709
White - other	n=762
Black	n=126
Asian	n=257
Other	n=172

Table 48 describes students' experiences of sexual misconduct and sexual harassment since starting college according to ethnicity. Students identifying as White Irish represented a large majority of the student sample. This group also reported the highest rates of experiencing sexual misconduct and harassment across all measures. Students identifying as Asian or Asian Irish consistently reported the lowest rates of sexual misconduct and sexual harassment. Students from other White backgrounds, Black or Black Irish backgrounds and other backgrounds reported similar rates across most items. For example, the experience of completed penetration through tactics of incapacitation or force (or threat of force) was reported by 11% of Asian students, 18% of Black and other White students, 20% of other ethnicity students, and 25% of White Irish students. Sexist hostility was the most common form of harassment experienced by all student groups, with a range from 46% of Asian students to 70% among White Irish students reporting exposure to sexist hostility.

Table 48. *Percentage of students who reported experience of forms of sexual misconduct; exposure to different perpetrator tactics; experience of sexual misconduct by tactics of incapacitation or force; and experience of forms of sexual harassment since beginning college, by ethnicity.*

Experience of sexual misconduct	White - Irish	White - other	Black	Asian	Other
Unwanted sexual touching, completed or attempted penetration	45.7	37.8	36.5	26.1	40.7
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	38.1	32.2	29.4	21.4	32.6
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	29.5	22.2	22.2	16.3	24.4
Exposure to each perpetrator tactic					
Acts of coercion	33.7	28.1	31.7	19.8	33.7
Incapacitation	36.3	25.3	19.0	16.3	29.7
Force or threat of force	20.1	18.9	19.0	11.7	15.7
Experience of sexual misconduct, through incapacitation or force (or threat of force)					
Unwanted sexual touching, penetration, or attempted penetration	41.1	32.4	29.4	21.8	32.6
Completed or attempted oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	31.2	24.8	21.4	14.0	24.4
Completed oral, vaginal, or anal penetration	24.5	17.6	17.5	10.9	20.3
Experience of different forms of sexual harassment					
Sexist hostility	69.5	63.3	51.6	45.9	65.7
Sexual hostility	60.6	52.6	43.7	37.0	50.0
Unwanted sexual relationship	40.1	29.3	26.2	21.4	29.1
Electronic communication	31.4	27.0	19.8	19.8	24.4

6. Perceptions of Campus Climate, HEI Responses and Peers

Although 36% of students disagreed with the statement "There is not much I can do about sexual misconduct on this campus", 29% of students agreed with it and 35% were neutral

The topics covered in this section guide us in understanding how well prepared and empowered students currently feel in accessing college-based and community supports. Given the sexual violence and harassment experiences described in earlier sections, it is critical to understand students' knowledge of relevant supports and services available in their colleges.

This section describes the SES findings on this issue, along with perceptions of institutional trustworthiness, the levels of peer support described by students who are affected by sexual violence and harassment, and the attitudes held by non-affected peers. Student experiences of preventative programmes offered by Irish HEIs are described for the first time, offering an important insight on the current processes that HEIs use to reach out to students.

The SES included measures relevant to the college experience, personal health, and well-being. Using responses to items on college engagement, depression and anxiety, the section concludes with an overview of the potential impact that sexual misconduct and harassment can have on students.

Student sample: Total	
No experience of sexual misconduct	n=3,401
Experience of sexual misconduct	n=2,625

Institutional Trust in Reporting

Responses to items from the ARC3 Campus Climate survey module indicated how much students trusted their college to respond effectively when a report of sexual misconduct is made. The items cover beliefs about whether the college would investigate the report in a respectful, proactive manner, and the possibility that the college might stigmatise the person who made the report. Responses to several illustrative items are provided below, explored in relation to students who had any experience of unwanted touching, attempted or completed penetration during their time in college.

Students who had not experienced sexual misconduct were more positive about how colleges would respond to reports of misconduct. Three quarters or more of these students said it was likely the college would handle the reporting process appropriately. With the exception of one item, the equivalent figures for students who had experienced misconduct were 8-11% lower. Less than 60% of this group of students said the college was likely to make practical accommodations to support the student or address the factors underlying the misconduct.

Table 49. *Percentage of students who said it was 'likely' or 'very likely' that their college would respond in a particular way to a report of sexual misconduct.*

The college would ...	Students Who Had Not Experienced Sexual Misconduct	Students Who Had Experienced Sexual Misconduct
Maintain the privacy of the person making the report	87.4	83.4
Take the report seriously	81.7	73.1
Support the person making the report	80.0	72.4
Handle the report fairly	75.4	66.8
Make accommodations to support the person (e.g., academic, safety)	66.8	58.1
Take action to address factors that may have led to the sexual misconduct	68.5	57.2

HEI Programming on Sexual Misconduct - Written or Verbal Information

As part of the survey, students were asked whether they had received written or verbal information from their college on sexual misconduct since beginning college. A rather low percentage of students said they had received this information, particularly in relation to how to report an incident of sexual misconduct. Students who had experienced sexual misconduct were no more likely than other students to say they had received these forms of information.

Table 50. *Percentage of students who received written or verbal information regarding sexual misconduct, since beginning college.*

The college would ...	Students Who Had Not Experienced Sexual Misconduct	Students Who Had Experienced Sexual Misconduct
The definitions of types of sexual misconduct	19.2	21.1
How to report an incident of sexual misconduct	11.1	9.9
Where to go to get help if someone you know experiences sexual misconduct	15.5	16.3

Student Awareness of Sexual Misconduct Supports and Processes

Receiving written or verbal information are not the only ways that students can become aware of supports and services. Three items asked students about whether they possessed the particular, applied awareness that they would need if misconduct took place. Students indicated whether they knew:

- Where to get help on campus for themselves or a friend
- Where to go to make a report of sexual misconduct
- If they understood what happens when a student makes a report

The tables below show the percentage of students who agreed, gave neutral responses, or disagreed that they had these forms of applied knowledge. About half of all students disagreed with the statement that they would know where to get help on campus, rising to approximately 60% in relation to knowing where to go to report an incident and nearly 70% for knowing what happens when an incident is reported. Compared with other students, those students who had experienced sexual misconduct were less likely to agree that they possessed relevant knowledge.

"Reporting sexual misconduct doesn't seem like an option I would consider because I wouldn't know how or where to start and would be bullied/ harassed by my abuser's friends."

Figure 38.

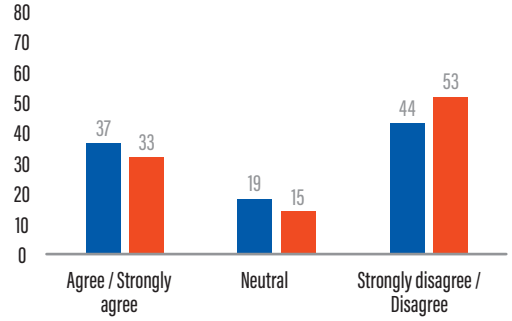


Figure 39.

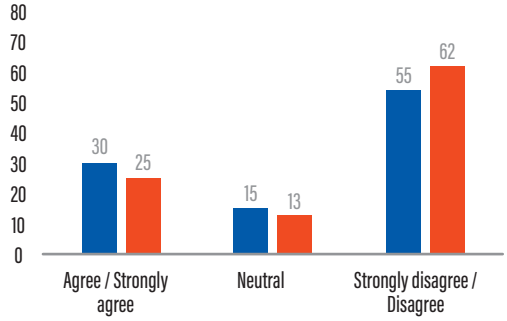


Figure 40.

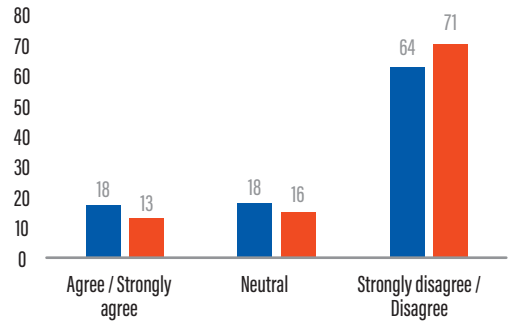


Figure 38. *Percentage of students who agreed they would know where to get help on campus if they or a friend experienced sexual misconduct.*

PG Taught
PG Research

Figure 39. *Percentage of students who agreed that they would know where to go to make a report of sexual misconduct.*

PG Taught
PG Research

Figure 40. *Percentage of students who agreed that they understand what happens when a student reports a claim of sexual misconduct at their college.*

PG Taught
PG Research

The indicators of awareness for specific services provided more positive findings. Students were asked how aware they were of the function of campus and community services in responding to sexual misconduct. Over 40% of students said they had a high level of awareness of four services that respond to students affected by misconduct – the Counselling Service, Student Services, the Health Unit, and Students' Union Welfare Officer. There was a relatively low level of awareness of Rape Crisis Centres, although the wording of the question may have been interpreted by some students to refer to responses relevant to the college itself.

Table 51. *Level of student awareness of the function of campus and community resources in relation to college sexual misconduct responses.*

	Very / Extremely Aware	Slightly / Somewhat Aware	Not Aware
Counselling Service	51.4	39.1	9.4
Student Services	49.7	40.5	9.8
College Health Unit	43.7	39.4	16.9
Students' Union Welfare Officer	42.2	43.4	14.4
Chaplaincy	20.6	42.0	37.4
Rape Crisis Centre	19.3	34.7	46.0
Sexual Assault Treatment Unit	10.1	29.9	60.0

Experiences of Preventative Programming and Initiatives

Students were asked if they had taken part in initiatives and events that have a preventative function. These are referred to here as preventative programming and initiatives. The survey items were framed in terms of 'seeing', 'hearing', 'attending', 'discussing', or 'visiting' resources concerning sexual misconduct. The initiatives and events included were formal offerings, with the exception of one informal option (discussing sexual misconduct with friends). The percentage of students who reported engaging in each form of intervention is reflective of programming carried out in the colleges that took part in the survey.

Several of the options were related to one another. For this report they were combined to simplify the responses. Exposure to posters and student publications on sexual misconduct both concern awareness raising through forms of media. They were collapsed into one item. Similarly, options related to group workshops and events were combined, namely participation in the SMART Consent workshop, any other consent workshop, attending a drama on consent, or taking part in a bystander intervention.

Overall, exposure to posters and publications represented the single most common initiative

Student sample: Total	
Year 1	n=1,940
Other undergraduate	n=3,422
Postgraduate	n=664

reported by students, followed by discussion with friends, seeing a Students' Union campaign, hearing about misconduct in the college orientation programme, and taking part in a consent workshop, bystander event, or attending a drama. Visiting the college website was the activity reported least commonly.

Several of the preventative strategies (media, Students' Union campaigns, discussion with friends) were more common among undergraduate students in Year 2 and later, suggesting greater exposure over time due to an ongoing campus presence. Consent workshops and orientation talks on misconduct were most commonly reported by Year 1 students, indicative of growth in the roll out of these strategies during the academic year 2019-20. Postgraduate students reported considerably less exposure to each type of programming.

Table 52. *Percentage of students who reported experiencing preventative programming since beginning college.*

Student sample: Undergraduate	
Posters and publications	n=3,967
Discussed with friends	n=3,189
Students' Union campaign	n=2,359
College orientation / induction	n=1,448
Consent workshops / other activities	n=1,177
Visited college website	n=297
No engagement	n=1,068

	Year 1 Students	Other UG Students	PG Taught and Research Students
Posters and publications	62.9	70.6	49.8
Discussed with friends	48.1	57.9	41.4
Students' Union campaign	34.5	44.3	26.2
College orientation / induction	28.1	23.3	15.7
Consent / bystander workshops, drama and events	24.8	17.8	13.0
Visited college website	4.5	4.9	6.3

Table 53 focuses on undergraduate students only, to assess how participation in preventative programming may impact on awareness of college services. Students who did not engage with any preventative initiatives were much less likely to know where to get help, how to make a report of sexual misconduct, or what happens when a complaint is made. While awareness of campus options for help reached 40-49% among students who took part in one of the preventative initiatives, it was only 20% among students who did not engage with any initiative.

Table 53. *Percentage of undergraduate students who agreed that they have knowledge of college support services, by engagement in prevention initiatives since starting college.*

	Consent Workshops / Other Activities	Posters / Publications	Misconduct Talk - Orientation	Students' Union Events	No Engagement With Any Initiative
If a friend or I experienced sexual misconduct, I know where to go to get help on campus	47.8	39.9	49.1	43.1	19.9
I would know where to go to make a report of sexual misconduct	22.5	16.3	21.4	17.7	10.5
I understand what happens when a student reports a claim of sexual misconduct at my college	39.0	29.9	37.4	31.7	16.8

About one third of students who had engaged in a preventative initiative said they had received verbal or written information on definitions of sexual misconduct. One fifth of these students received information on how to report an incident of misconduct. One quarter received information on where to go to get help if they want to help someone. While these figures represent a minority of students, by comparison only 3-5% of students who reported no engagement in events or initiatives said they had received such information.

"Being able to openly talk about consent and misconduct in [college] created an awareness not only of supports but of repercussions."

	Consent Workshops / Other Activities	Posters / Publications	Misconduct Talk - Orientation	Students' Union Events	No Engagement With Any Initiative
The definitions of types of sexual misconduct	36.1	26.0	37.0	31.4	5.5
How to report an incident of sexual misconduct	19.8	13.0	20.2	15.7	3.4
Where to go to get help if someone you know experiences sexual misconduct	26.8	20.2	29.2	23.6	3.9

Table 54. *Percentage of undergraduate students who said they had received verbal or written information on sexual misconduct, by engagement in prevention initiatives since starting college.*

Peer perceptions, by Experience of Sexual Misconduct

The peer perceptions module was included in the SES to assess what responses were anticipated by students were they to tell their peers that they had experienced sexual misconduct. Some items are negatively phrased, anticipating blame, stigma, or infantilising responses, while other items are positively phrased, anticipating emotional and tangible support.

Table 55 displays examples of negatively phrased items, and shows the percentage of students who said their friends or peers would 'never' or 'rarely' respond in the ways described. In the case of students who had not experienced sexual misconduct, 80%+ reported that friends or peers would rarely or never say the person could have done more to prevent the experience, treat the person as a child, or stigmatise them.

These findings suggest a positive climate among students with regard to disclosure. However this conclusion is tempered somewhat by reports from students who had experienced sexual misconduct, the percentage of these students who said friends or peers would rarely or never respond negatively was approximately 10% lower than for other students.

	Students Who Had Not Experienced Sexual Misconduct	Students Who Had Experienced Sexual Misconduct
Tell you that you could have done more to prevent this experience from occurring	81.1	70.4
Treat you as if you were a child or somehow incompetent	91.9	83.9
Treat you differently in some way than before you told them that made you uncomfortable	80.0	71.6

Table 55. *Percentage of students who anticipated friends or peers would never / rarely respond in the following ways to a disclosure of sexual misconduct.*

Several examples of positively phrased peer responses are presented in Table 56. This table presents the percentage of students who said that friends or peers would 'frequently' or 'always' respond in a positive manner. The anticipation of positive emotional support was similar for students who had experienced sexual misconduct and those who had not. Three quarters of the students felt that friends or peers would reassure them. Just over 60% said their friends or peers would say it would be alright or hold them, with fewer males expressing this belief (45%).

Endorsement was lower again for the idea that friends or peers would help them get information about coping with sexual misconduct – with a large gap on this item between students who had experienced sexual misconduct and those who had not.

	Students Who Had Not Experienced Sexual Misconduct	Students Who Had Experienced Sexual Misconduct
Reassure you that you are a good person	73.6	73.4
Comfort you by telling you it would be all right or by holding you	62.7	63.3
Help you get information of any kind about coping with the experience	58.6	41.9

Table 56. *Percentage of students who reported their friends or peers would frequently / always respond in the following ways to a disclosure of sexual misconduct.*

Personal Safety, by Experience of Sexual Misconduct

The ARC3 campus safety module includes items designed to assess how students appraise their environment on campus. This section was adapted for the Irish setting, extending the settings covered to include perceptions of safety in their accommodation and when socialising. This reflects the greater level of community integration of student life in Ireland compared with the U.S. The tables below report on all students who completed the SES.

Figure 41 shows that, although a large majority of students feel safe from sexual misconduct on or around the college campus, appraisals of safety were 15% lower for students who experienced sexual misconduct compared with other students. Figure 42 indicates higher levels of safety for students in their accommodation, with a small difference between students depending on experience of sexual misconduct.

Figure 41. *Percentage of students who agreed that they felt safe from sexual misconduct on or around campus.*

Figure 42. *Percentage of students who agreed that they felt safe from sexual misconduct at their accommodation.*

Figure 43. *Percentage of students who agreed that they felt safe from sexual misconduct while socialising at night.*

Figure 41.

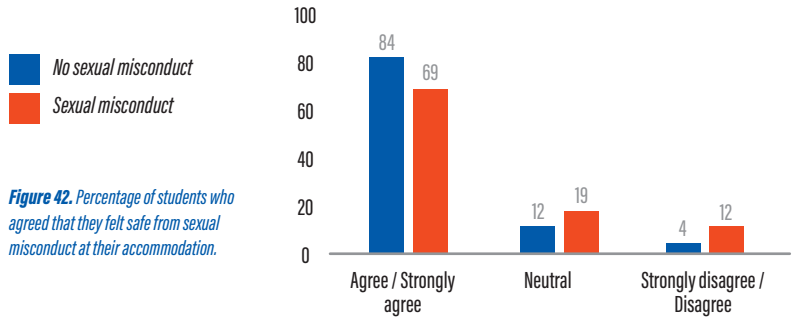


Figure 42.

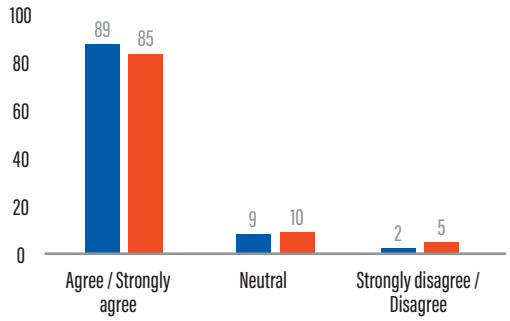
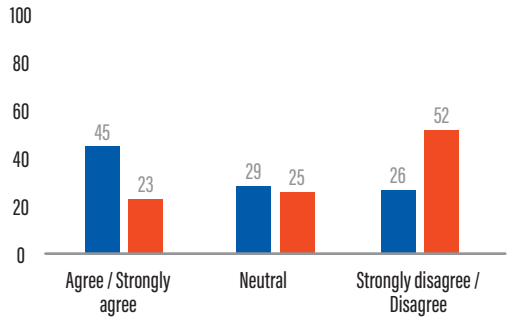


Figure 43 shows socialising at night to be the key area of vulnerability with regard to safety perceptions. Overall, less than half of the students felt safe from sexual misconduct when socialising. Less than a quarter of students who had experienced sexual misconduct felt safe in this setting. This finding highlights the role of the social domain as the critical environment where sexual misconduct takes place. There was a strong interaction between safety and gender identity. For example, while only 24% of female students who had never experienced sexual misconduct said they felt safe while socialising at night, the equivalent figure for females who had previously experienced sexual misconduct was even lower (13%).

Figure 43.



Personal Health and Well-Being, College Engagement

A brief exploration of the personal impact of sexual misconduct is presented in the final part of this section, drawing on responses made to items relevant to personal health, well-being, and college engagement. Comparisons are made between students who experienced non-consensual attempted or completed penetration and other students.

The first indicator presented is the perception of personal health. Students responded to a single item indicator of current health status, with five response options from poor- excellent. Nearly half (48%) of students with no experience of non-consensual attempted or completed penetration said they had 'above average' or 'excellent' health (13% reported 'fair' or 'poor' health). Fewer students (38%) who had experienced these forms of sexual violence reported above average / excellent health, and 20% of them said their health was fair / poor. This difference by experience of sexual violence was reflected in self-perceptions of health among females, males, and non-binary students.

Student sample: Total	
No experience of non-consensual attempted / completed penetration	n=3,837
Experience of non-consensual attempted / completed penetration	n=2,189

Figure 44.

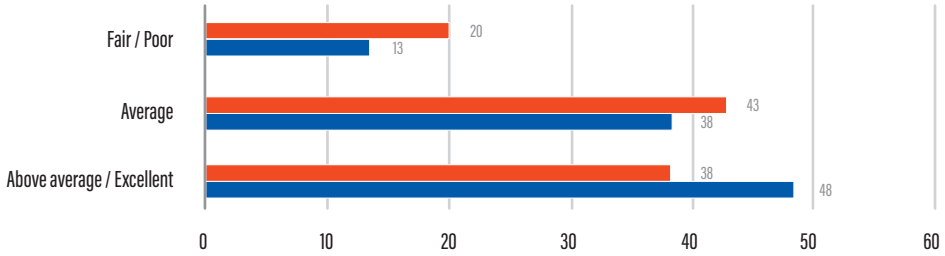


Figure 44. *Students self-reported overall health (%), grouped by students who reported experience of attempted or completed penetration and those who did not.*

No attempted /completed penetration

Experience of attempted / completed penetration

In adapting the ARC3 survey, the research team included a standardised four item measure of depression and anxiety. The PHQ-4 includes two items on each factor, and can be used to screen for likely clinical issues. Scores are grouped into normal, mild, moderate and severe categories. More than four in ten students who had experienced non-consensual attempted or completed penetration reported moderate or severe PHQ-4 scores – nearly one quarter (23%) were in the moderate category and 21% in the severe category for depression and anxiety. By comparison, 29% of other students recorded moderate or severe scores (17% in the moderate category and 12% in the severe category). Notwithstanding the observation that there were high scores for depression and anxiety for the students who completed the SES as a whole, the experience of non-consensual attempted or completed penetration appears to be an additional risk factor.

Responses to an item from each factor are presented below. Figure 45 describes more frequent feelings of depression among students who have experienced attempted or completed non-consensual penetration – 35% of these students reported feeling depressed more than half the days or nearly every day over the previous two weeks, compared with 22% of other students.

Figure 45.

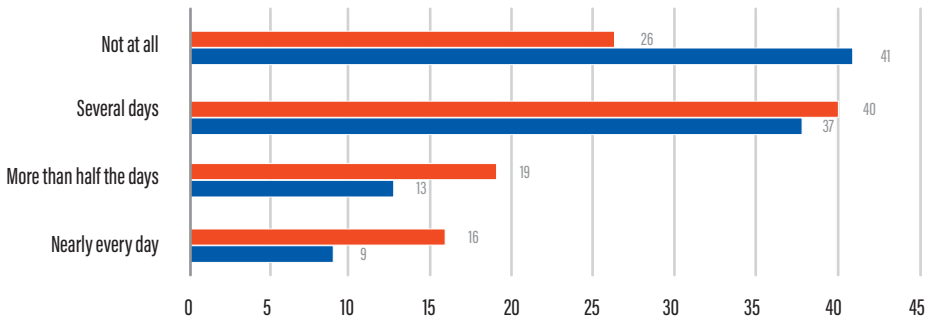


Figure 45. *Percentage of students who reported feeling down, depressed, or hopeless, by experience of attempted or completed penetration.*

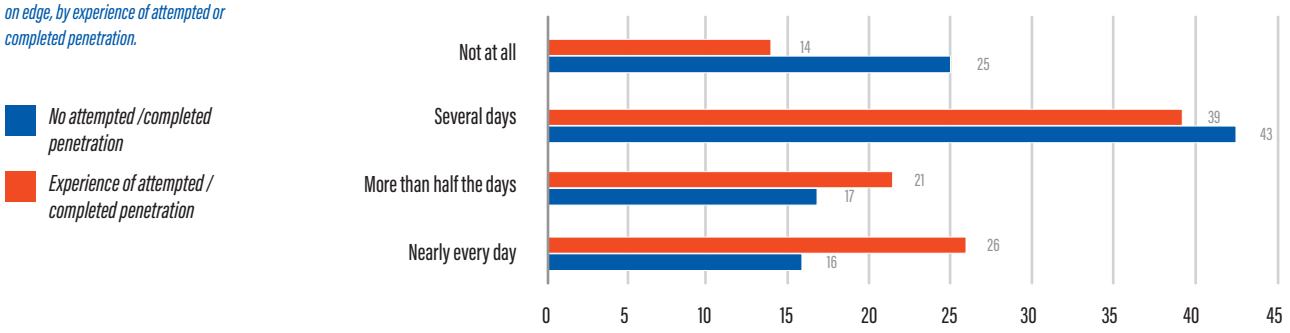
No attempted /completed penetration

Experience of attempted / completed penetration

This difference extended to feelings of anxiety. Nearly half of students who had experienced non-consensual attempted or completed penetration said they felt anxious over half the days or nearly every day in the previous two weeks, compared with 33% of other students who completed the survey. These differences in experiences of depression and anxiety symptoms extended to females, males, and non-binary students exposed to sexual violence.

Figure 46. *Percentage of students who reported feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge, by experience of attempted or completed penetration.*

Figure 46.



Turning to indicators of academic engagement with college, 21% of Year 1 females who had experienced sexual misconduct since coming to college said they were absent from class 'frequently' or 'most of the time', compared with 11% of First Year females who had not experienced any form of sexual misconduct. A similar difference was noted for Year 1 male students, as 25% of those who had experienced sexual misconduct in their first year said they missed class frequently or most of the time – compared with 16% of other male students. Nearly three quarters (73%) of Year 1 females not affected by sexual misconduct said the idea that they had been thinking of dropping out of college 'didn't apply to me at all'. The equivalent figure for female Year 1 students affected by sexual misconduct was 61%. A similar gap was noted for Year 1 male students, with 53% of those affected by sexual misconduct and 66% of others saying that the idea of dropping out did not apply to them at all.

Applying the same indicators to assess the impact of sexual harassment, a higher rate of absence from class was noted among students who had experienced sexual harassment via electronic communication during Year 1 of college – 23% of females and 29% of males said they missed class frequently or most of the time, compared to 13% of females and 14% of male Year 1 students who had not experienced this form of harassment. Similar patterns were observed for other forms of harassment including sexist hostility, sexual hostility and unwanted attempts to establish a sexual relationship, albeit to a lesser degree. There was also an observable relationship between experiences of sexual harassment and the view that dropping out of college did not apply to them at all. This was again most evident among Year 1 students who experienced harassment via electronic communication – 62% of females and 55% of males said the idea of dropping out did not apply to them at all, compared to 70% of female students and 65% of male students who had no experience of this form of harassment.

"As a first year I feel we don't know who or where to go for help and would recommend a consent workshop is mandatory during a day within the first 5 weeks of college"

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DISCUSSION AND RECOMME

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Discussion of Findings and Recommendations

The Sexual Experiences Survey has identified high rates of experiences of sexual misconduct and harassment among students of Irish HEIs. It is the first national survey of third level students since 2013 and includes questions from campus climate surveys for the first time on a large scale in Ireland. The findings point to a high level of exposure to unwanted sexual experiences across the student population generally and within each sub-group of students described in this report – at all levels of study, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

The rates of sexual misconduct and harassment reported in the findings section are higher than comparable studies in the U.S. that have used the ARC3 survey modules. There were several commonalities between the SES and two online surveys carried out by Students' Unions in Ireland in the past decade (Say Something, USI, 2013; Stand Together, QSU, 2017). There were similarities in survey completion rates, gender composition, breakdown of respondents from universities and Institutes of Technology, sexual orientation, and year in college. Rates of non-disclosure of sexual assault were comparable, as were the proportions of students who said the perpetrator had been drinking or using drugs. However, higher rates of unwanted sexual behaviour were reported by the SES sample than those in either survey.

Summary of findings

Surveyed toward the end of their first year in college, 19% of Year 1 students said they experienced non-consensual penetration while incapacitated or through force (or threat of force), rising to 27% of students in Year 3 or later. Given the relatively high rate of non-disclosure among Year 1 students, the findings suggest that one in ten of the Year 1 students experienced non-consensual penetration during the year and had not disclosed to anyone. Where disclosure did occur, it was mostly to peers, who may not have had exposure to education or skills to support others in this situation.

A similar pattern repeated for the groups of students reviewed in each section of the report – across gender identity, sexual orientation, relationship status, ethnicity, disability, or the type of HEI attended. Most students knew the perpetrator of the misconduct described in follow up incidents, and alcohol and / or drug use was involved in the majority of these incidents. While relatively few of the incidents of non-consensual attempted or completed penetration took place on campus, 29% of students affected by this form of violence said the perpetrator was a student at their college. Between 30-40% of students had not disclosed the incident to anyone prior to taking part in the survey. Relatively few students who had disclosed did so to professionals such as counsellors, health care workers, or college staff. Students exposed to sexual misconduct reported higher levels of depression and anxiety, more absence from class, and worse health perceptions.

Rates of sexual harassment identified in the SES were similar to a recent survey of students at NUI Galway (SMART Consent, 2018), with sexist and sexual hostility posing particular issues. Three quarters of students in Year 3 or higher described experiencing sexist hostility at some point since joining college, while two thirds had experienced sexual hostility. Depending on the sub-group, up to a quarter of the students answering follow up questions on a particular incident said the harassment had taken place on campus, and 45% of students said the perpetrator was a student in their college. More than four in ten of students answering follow up questions on harassment said the incident involved offensive language, gestures, or pictures, unwanted sexual attention, and unwanted touching. Although many students used minimising or avoidance strategies in their response to harassment, the most common reaction was to tell the perpetrator to stop. Just as with sexual violence incidents, very few students made a report about the harassment incident to the college.

For the first time, the SES provided an analysis of awareness of college supports and services, along with rates of student participation in preventative initiatives that are partly designed to raise awareness of sexual violence. The depiction of campus climate was elaborated through items on institutional trust and peer supportiveness. Twenty per cent or less of the students who took part in the SES reported that they have received information on sexual misconduct and related college services. The percentage of students who said they knew how to access services were similar or slightly higher, ranging from 15-35% depending on the item. Rates of awareness of key student services as they relate to sexual misconduct were higher again, raising above 40% to a maximum of 51% for the College Counselling Service.

Rates of exposure to face-to-face workshops, events, and initiatives with a preventative function ranged from 25-35%, highest for attendance at Students' Union events related to sexual misconduct. There was evidence that higher levels of engagement – with media, consent workshops and related activities, orientation talks, or Students' Union events – was associated with considerably higher levels of awareness. As another resource that students had available to them, peers were generally perceived to be supportive if someone were to disclose an experience of sexual misconduct. However, with regard to safety, the greatest area of vulnerability was in perceptions of socialising at night. Only 24% of female students felt safe when socialising at night, with this figure dropping to 13% of females who had experienced sexual misconduct since joining college.

Scope of the Sexual Experiences Survey

The SES asked students about experiences of sexual violence and harassment during their time in college, regardless of whether an experience took place on campus or not. Follow up questions provided further context by asking where the incident took place and whether the perpetrator was a student on the person's campus. The issue of scope can be contentious when researching these topics. Some may argue that the college does not have a role in incidents that have taken place outside the campus, external to college-related events or placements.

The student-centred perspective taken in the SES entails assessing the incidence and impact of misconduct or harassment regardless of where it takes place, which is supported in the research literature (Cantor et al., 2020). Students' college experiences and the experiences they have while they are at college are inevitably inter-related. Strictly speaking, living arrangements, peer groups, socialising, part-time work, and pastimes are independent of the formal college experience. Yet these factors may be frequently implicated in sexual violence and harassment, and would be configured differently in students' lives if they were not attending college.

In addition, students who have experiences of misconduct or harassment can experience distress that affects successful participation in the academic experience. This can contribute to a need for counselling or other forms of campus supports. It is therefore relevant to know how many students affected by misconduct or harassment engage with such services, and what level of unmet need may be present.

Prevention, disclosure, and support initiatives require a home. The college setting is ideally suited, as it is a structured environment where health promoting actions can be organised for mainstream delivery. The Irish HEI sector is reflective of the high rate of participation in higher education, with over 231,000 students enrolled in 2017-18 (HEA, 2019). Almost 160,000 of these were full-time undergraduate students, 70% of whom were aged 21 or younger and 52% female. Approximately 44,000 undergraduate students registered with HEIs as full-time first year students in 2017-18. Nearly 24,000 students in Irish HEIs were full-time postgraduate students in the same year, with 10% of these studying at doctoral level.

Given this context, scaling up and integrating the forms of preventative programming identified in the SES findings will be challenging, yet the introduction of novel, engaging approaches could enhance student engagement. The UK 'What Works' initiative draws attention to the critical role of belongingness and engagement in student success and lowered attrition rates. In Ireland, the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (2019) has highlighted a similar re-imagining of the college experience. 'What Works' also highlights the importance of leadership involvement to achieve systems change. Increasing the reach of student-facing initiatives will need the support of college leaders, including greater education for staff generally.

The role of the HEI sector in supporting gender equality is now well acknowledged, offering a policy comparison to draw on in developing the Consent Framework. The Gender Equality Action Plan 2018-2020 (HEA, 2018) shares features with the Consent Framework, including acknowledgment of the need to address organisational culture and governance as well as mainstream procedures and practices, and a focus on high priority areas. The HEA Centre for Excellence in Gender Equality is a model for supporting strategic, ongoing sectoral change, focused on funding, knowledge management and outcomes measurement, advocacy, and co-ordination of stakeholders.

Relating back to the SES, these functions illustrate the role that data can have in supporting positive, developmental sectoral change. There are also differences between the two areas of policy development. Action on gender inequality is currently focused on HEI staffing profiles, progression, and academic leadership. Yet the underlying connection between the two topic areas is underscored by the HEA report (2018) quoting President Higgins when he said that, *"It is here, in our universities, that we can begin to enact such transformative thinking as is necessary to create the foundations of a society that is more inclusive, participatory and equal"* (p. 2).

Limitations and Learning Arising from the SES

The SES aimed to provide information on student experiences of sexual health within the college context. It was also an initial attempt to work through the challenges of introducing a campus climate survey methodology into the Irish HEI sector. Both aspects of the SES project have yielded relevant learning. The findings offer a useful perspective on student experiences. Designing and implementing the survey provided useful learning that can feed into future efforts of this kind.

In terms of strengths, the survey drew on the resources of a research team based in a research-intensive, college environment, while the USI was able to ensure that the survey had credibility and reach. The partnership of USI on the project allowed access to expert input on decisions concerning survey design, content, and methodology, and was supportive for gaining the endorsement of the HEIs.

Adapting the U.S. campus climate survey

The U.S. ARC3 survey was the base for devising a campus climate survey relevant to the Irish HEI context. The ARC3 survey was extensively reviewed over several months by the research team, followed by input from over 50 students on survey content decisions and changes. The ARC3 survey comprises a set of topic-specific modules, and is a resource that can be used in whole or in part. The research team omitted several modules from the ARC in the interests of reducing participant burden.

In order to ensure a balanced content, we added additional psychometric scales to assess consent attitudes and behavioural intentions. Piloting of the survey revealed that survey completion continued to be burdensome and the content was edited further. The final set of SES modules ranged across topics such as mental health, sexual violence, sexual harassment, attitudes to consent, rape myths, and questions on alcohol and substance use. This provided comprehensive information but comments on the length of the survey were a theme in student feedback provided in open-ended items.

Response rates and HEI inclusion

In the future, particular attention should be taken to maximise survey response rates. Closer collaboration with national agencies and local HEIs could enable researchers to reduce survey fatigue. Survey completion burden could be addressed by running shorter surveys over several cycles. It is possible to refine the SES content, to prioritise which modules should be run on each occasion, remove modules that have limited relevance, and identify modules that could be included on a longer cycle. In this way the survey methodology could be refined with the aim of achieving the response rates of 30% achieved by some U.S. campus climate surveys.

Overall, 8.6% of students in USI affiliated HEIs responded to the survey and 4.3% completed the entire survey. Responses were considered complete if at least 80% of the survey questions were answered, this included all items covering experience of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. A total of 12,706 began the survey, with 6,054 completing it. The attrition in survey completion could be attributable to the comprehensive nature and length of the survey (median time to complete was 28.2 minutes), as well as the sensitive nature of the topics covered. For this reason, the total number of respondents varies slightly for items that appeared towards the end of the survey, or for those that were not mandatory.

Running the SES in Semester 2 ensured the maximum possible review of the student experience. For instance, Year 1 students were in a position to reflect on nearly a complete academic year. The SES online survey opened in February, one month before the Covid-19 lockdown began. Understandably, several HEIs due to send invitation emails were unable to do so as planned. This resulted in a more restricted sample than would otherwise have been the case. Two of the HEIs that the team were engaging with at the time lockdown began have established bystander and consent education programmes. As a result, students from these institutions did not take part. Several other Irish HEIs are not affiliated with USI and so were not included in this project.

Participant safety

Safety and well-being of participants was a paramount concern. The survey responses revealed a high level of negative experiences of sexual misconduct and harassment, and we were aware of the potential for students to have an adverse reaction to taking part. In response, we provided information on support services at several points in the survey. The sensitive nature of the content was flagged in the invitation email, the survey landing page, and during the survey itself. ARC3 items at the end of the survey allowed the research team to assess the distress associated with completing the survey. Responses to these items showed that:

- Among female students, 7% found that answering the survey questions was much more distressing than *'other things you encounter in day to day life'*, while 21% found the questions to be much less distressing, Responses from male and non-binary students were broadly comparable.
- Over two thirds (68%) of female students said it was *'definitely important'* for researchers to ask about non-consensual experiences, while 0.6% of females said it was *'definitely not important'*. Similar responses were given by non-binary students, while 50% of male students said it was definitely important for researchers to study these topics.
- One quarter of female students '*strongly agreed'* that taking part in the survey was personally meaningful, and 2% *'strongly disagreed'*. Responses from non-binary students were similar, while a smaller percentage of male students (14%) strongly agreed that taking part was personally meaningful.

Self-selection of participants

The sampling approach used in the SES was to target all students. Future work could be more targeted by taking a quota or weighted approach to build up a representative cross-section of the student population. While a large number of students took part in the survey, it is hard to state with certainty that the levels of sexual misconduct and harassment revealed in the findings constitute an estimate of population prevalence.

Self-selection could have complex implications for the findings. For instance, some students affected by sexual misconduct or harassment may have felt particularly motivated to voice their experience through the survey. This could have the effect of oversampling for students affected by misconduct. It is also plausible that some students with negative experiences would have found participation too distressing or may have discontinued the survey before completing it. These factors would have led to under-sampling of students affected by misconduct or harassment. Students without a strong interest in the topic may have experienced a low motivation to take part. It is not possible to say how these factors weighed against each other to result in the survey completions that we analysed.

Recommendations

The key recommendations of the SES Report 2020 on sexual violence and harassment are made with the intention of supporting the cultural change in HEIs that has begun over recent years, and which has been given impetus by the Department of Education and Skills (2019) Consent Framework.

While acknowledging that these issues are widespread and taking place at a concerning level, there is a need to respond proactively and constructively to the challenge of sexual violence and harassment. The Consent Framework provides a path for comprehensive engagement at multiple levels, from Government to statutory agencies, student advocacy groups and NGOs, HEI management, Students' Unions, staff, and, ultimately, with the students who are directly affected.

The following recommendations are made by the research team arising from the findings. They are based around the core proposal that HEIs should devise an institutional action plan and work together where appropriate on issues of shared interest. While the HEI is the focal level for implementation, all parts of the third level sector need to be involved in order to achieve success nationally.

Recommendation 1:

- To implement the Consent Framework guidelines as they apply to all stakeholders, including the Department of Education and Skills, the HEA, HEIs, staff, students, and community partners. At the level of individual HEIs this will entail having an agreed institutional action plan, meaning that:
  - All students have the opportunity to engage in sexual violence and harassment prevention and support programming, as a mainstreamed part of their college experience;
  - All staff have a basic understanding of the issues involved and the supports that can be signposted; and that some staff and student leaders are trained to provide additional support.
  - Senior management should highlight consent as integral to the quality of the college experience, supporting resource allocation for dedicated campus coordinators to support the actions envisaged in the Consent Framework.
  - Given the current context in relation to funding and Covid-19, there is a greater requirement on the Department of Education and Skills to take the lead in ensuring that resources are available.

Recommendation 2:

- For individual HEIs to engage with the survey findings as part of their action plan, in a manner that helps identify which responsive strategies can be prioritised in a particular institution.

Recommendation 3:

- While related, sexual violence and harassment require specific responses. The HEI action plan should take account of sexual violence and harassment separately where appropriate, for instance in relation to the greater likelihood for harassment to take place on campus and for it to be perpetrated by students from the same institution.

Recommendation 4:

- For each HEI to recognise in their planning that, as organisations with permeable boundaries and reciprocal interaction with surrounding communities, they have a duty of care over students while they are enrolled at college, and therefore engage with their local community stakeholders, including Rape Crisis Centres.

Recommendation 5:

- There should be involvement of students and Students' Unions in designing action plans at each HEI; this is in recognition of the need for an inclusive approach that acknowledges the diversity of experiences and issues identified in the SES Report.

Recommendation 6:

- HEI action plans should be sensitive to inclusion of different parts of the student community. Messaging and initiatives should be developed to be inclusive of females, males, non-binary students, and all sexual orientations. All members of the college community should be regarded as integral to the success of efforts at change. There should be a positive tone to prevention and engagement, given the multiple associations that exist with sexual health – from the pursuit of a rewarding, enriching sexual identity to the avoidance of harm.

Recommendation 7:

- Recognition in action plans that risk of exposure to sexual violence and harassment extends across all groups of students in HEIs, but that vulnerable groups and high risk issues should be given particular attention. For example, the experience of Year 1 students should be addressed, as should the issue of sexual violence being perpetrated in the context of alcohol / drug use.

Recommendation 8:

- For the sector to establish a recognised process for measurement and ongoing monitoring. Agreeing recognised indicators for sexual violence and harassment is critical, as is the need to have agreed indicators of engagement with programming and education. Measurement should take account of the emerging systems of anonymous reporting, revised complaints processes, staff training, survey and qualitative methodologies.

Recommendation 9:

- A sectoral commitment to continuation of the campus climate survey methodology to assess progress over time.

Recommendation 10:

- The SES findings on preventative initiatives show considerable variation in practice across HEIs, yet suggest that engagement with initiatives is growing and appears to have a demonstrable positive impact. HEIs should not act alone in engaging with the Consent Framework; there should be sharing of best practice between HEIs to ensure the cultivation of well developed, mutually supportive community of practice in this area.

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