

## 15 MAY 2024 – MEDIA STATEMENT

University of Tasmania status of how it responds to, and prevents, Gender Based Violence labelled 'embryonic' by independent report

Seven months after announcing they would be conducting an independent report into Gender Based Violence; the University of Tasmania has published their findings. Lyn Walker, an expert in designing prevention and support strategies within the higher education sector, compiled the report and describes the University's work in prevention of Gender Based Violence being described as 'embryonic'.

The report identifies 47 key recommendations to the University alongside a five-year recommendation for implementation of these recommendations.

"The report makes recommendations from statements of zero tolerance from the Vice-Chancellor, to additional resourcing requirements, to complete overhauls of University Policy and Procedures", says Tasmanian University Student Association (TUSA) President Liam McLaren.

"Now is not a time for conversations of budgetary constraints and financial implications. If the University is serious about protecting their students and staff and responding to and preventing Gender Based Violence, then the required resources must be provided by senior management to fully adopt the 47 recommendations made by this report," iterated President McLaren.

The TUSA now call for the University Council and Executive to step up to the plate and provide adequate resources to allow the implementation of this report.

As of 2021, the National Student Safety Survey (NSSS) reported that 1 in 20 students had experienced sexual assault since starting university, while 1 in 6 students had experienced sexual harassment at the University of Tasmania.

The TUSA iterates that what this report makes abundantly clear is that the issue does not lie with the individual staff on the ground that are supporting students, yet rather with the resourcing and support that they are given.

President McLaren said, "The staff on the ground that are working in these areas are amazing people who are simply doing their best to work within the means they have been provided by executive."

Finally, the report rightfully acknowledges the social responsibility that the University of Tasmania has in being the catalyst for social change by shaping the response to Gender Based Violence in the community and instilling gender equity as a core value in the next generation of professionals and in the broader Tasmanian context.

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