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1 August 2017

Kate Jenkins  
Sex Discrimination Commissioner  
Australian Human Rights Commission  
email: [communications@humanrights.gov.au](mailto:communications@humanrights.gov.au)

Professor Margaret Gardner AO  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Universities Australia  
email: [Margaret.Gardner@monash.edu](mailto:Margaret.Gardner@monash.edu)

Dear Professor Gardner and Commissioner Jenkins,

On behalf of the Australian New Zealand Student Services Association (ANZSSA), I am writing to express our support for the leadership you have taken in completing and releasing this important survey report today.

With staff embedded in student support units across the nation, we are exposed to the impact of unacceptable behaviours on our students, on their ability to study, to feel safe on campus, and to flourish within our remarkable learning institutions.

The impact of unacceptable behaviour on students can be far reaching. Students require personal and emotional support, but also financial assistance, safe emergency housing, adjustments and accommodations to their study timetable. They also require administrative support in choosing study load and pathways that will enable them to complete their degree while managing personal distress. Student support services are designed to provide such support.

We know that students reporting unacceptable behaviour will report to staff at all levels and across all aspects of the university community. We understand the importance of whole-of-institution approaches to deterring unacceptable behaviours, providing appropriate support to survivors and ensuring there are clear pathways for reporting unacceptable behaviours with appropriate follow up and investigation.

We look forward to working with Universities Australia in ensuring staff on the ground are best prepared as first responders to direct students to sources of assistance. We look forward to working with UA and the Australian Psychological Society to ensure that best practice resources are in place for the counselling and psychological support staff, to be equipped and well supported to address any surge or spike in reporting that may occur as a result of the national interest in this report. We look forward to a continued partnership with our students to enable respectful and healthy learning communities.

We welcome this report. We welcome the efforts of the Australian Human Rights Commission and Universities Australia to enable the Nation to understand the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault in Australian universities.

Finally, we thank the many students and survivors who have come forward, either through the Respect.Now.Always. submission process, or individually to their institutions to tell us about their experiences, and to encourage us as a community to do better.

Yours sincerely

Jordi Austin  
President

cc. Belinda Robinson, Chief Executive, Universities Australia  
Christie White, Vice-President, Australian New Zealand Student Services Association Inc. (ANZSSA)