

OFFICIAL

Released under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)*

Defence Force Ombudsman

Restorative engagement in Defence abuse

What is Restorative Engagement ? (RE)

What are the benefits?



Defence Force Ombudsman RE Program



Our Success



Testimonials

'It went really well. I was extremely apprehensive, nervous and unsure how I would feel during the conference. My facilitator was very nice. She made me feel at ease and explained the process clearly so I understood what to expect. The Defence Representative was also extremely nice. I found her to be very genuine and sincere. She seemed to genuinely care about my story.'



OFFICIAL



OFFICIAL

REDFO@ombudsman.gov.au



OFFICIAL

Released under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)*

National Student Ombudsman

Empowering students, ensuring fairness

Restorative engagement in student complaints



Origins of the OFFICIAL National Student Ombudsman

2017 and 2021 student safety surveys

2021 *National Student Safety Survey* showed little improvement in student awareness and satisfaction of gender-based violence reporting and support options from the 2017 *Change the Course* report.

Sept. 2023 Senate Inquiry on current & proposed sexual consent laws

Made several findings about the sector's responses to sexual violence, noting *"the committee lacks confidence that the university sector (as a whole) will respond appropriately to the crisis without strong intervention."*

Recommended the establishment of an independent oversight body.

Feb. 2024 Universities Accord Final Report

Supported the creation of the NSO, stating that *"students need a simpler, more accessible mechanism that allows them to pursue their complaints with appropriate supports"*.

Noted that *"systemic issues [related to gender-based violence] persist across the higher education sector, suggesting governance arrangements could be improved"* & that complaints options for students were complex, slow and confusing.

July 2023 Universities Accord Interim Report

Identified the creation of the NSO as the first Action of the Plan, noting that it would *"ensure domestic and international students have an effective, trauma-informed complaints mechanism to use when they are not satisfied by their higher education provider's response."*

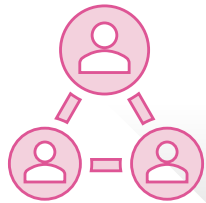
Feb. 2024 Action Plan Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education

OFFICIAL

NSO Restorative Engagement model



Collaborative, trauma-informed approach:
emphasis on student safety



Uniqueness of NSO alternative dispute resolution model: internal facilitation of RE, conciliation function, focus on early resolution



Pre-requisites:
agreed set of facts, voluntary participation

Process and what we've seen so far



Careful assessment of suitability of cases for RE
including student support and accessibility needs



**Work with provider to explain process &
establish agreement to facts**
If facts not agreed, proceed to conciliation



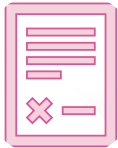
**Outcome of RE depends on case and
student's desired outcome**
Closure, acknowledgement for student the priority

Lessons learned, looking to the future



Student-provider relationship management critical

Given cases are current, not historical



Establishing agreement to facts can be challenging

Where no agreement, NSO ADR function can be helpful e.g. facilitated resolution, conciliation



Importance of collaboration between NSO, providers and other stakeholders

NSO RE training for providers planned

OFFICIAL

Thank you.

Any questions?



1300 395 775



nso.gov.au



NSOOutreach@ombudsman.gov.au



National
Student
Ombudsman