



Response to the 2021 National Student Safety Survey Report

Statement by the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL)

CAUL acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and that the Council Members are located across all of Australia. We pay our respect to the Elders past, present and emerging, for all First Nations Peoples, wherever they are located.

On behalf of the Council of Australian University Librarians we note with concern the results of the [National Student Safety Survey](#), and we support the [statement by Professor John Dewar](#), the Chair of Universities Australia.

University libraries should be safe spaces for students and we are deeply sorry that instances of sexual harassment and sexual assault have occurred in our libraries. We are absolutely committed to working with our colleagues to ensure that students both *feel* safe and *are* safe when they choose to spend time in university libraries, and that our staff are able to sensitively and appropriately assist any students who are victims of this type of behaviour.

We acknowledge that students who are sexually and gender diverse are at significantly greater risk than all other groups of being sexually harassed or sexually assaulted, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people living with disabilities, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds are also at greater risk of sexual harassment and assault.

CAUL Members are committed to working through all of the detail in the National Student Safety Survey report, listening to students, and working collaboratively both within and across our universities to ensure that university library spaces are safe for all students.

Carmel O’Sullivan, Deputy Chair of CAUL and Acting Chair of the CAUL Board

About CAUL Inc.

The [Council of Australian University Librarians Incorporated \(CAUL\)](#) is the peak leadership organisation for university libraries in Australia and New Zealand. CAUL Members are the University Librarians or equivalent of the 39 institutions that have representation on Universities Australia and the 8 members of the Council of New Zealand University Librarians (CONZUL). CAUL makes a significant contribution to higher education strategy, policy and outcomes through a commitment to a shared purpose: To transform how people experience knowledge – how it can be discovered, used, and shared. CAUL’s vision is that society is transformed through the power of research, teaching, and learning. University libraries are essential knowledge and information infrastructures that enable student achievement and research excellence.