

## Quick Guide: AVA's Whole Institution Approach to preventing and tackling sexual misconduct in higher education

The Whole Institution Approach is a model developed by AVA researchers and prevention experts to support higher education institutions in preventing gender-based violence. The model identifies the different activities that need to be delivered in higher education settings to develop a whole institution approach to preventing gender-based violence, and considers the key players who need to be engaged – staff, students, leadership. This model is a robust and holistic approach to preventing gender-based violence, and is designed to promote real long-lasting change. The model applicable for universities has been adapted from AVA's renowned [Whole School Approach Model](#).

The model is made up of six key areas:



This guide has been developed by [AVA \(Against Violence & Abuse\)](#), a national charity committed to creating a world without gender-based violence and abuse. AVA is a feminist charity particularly recognised for specialist expertise in multiple disadvantage and children and young people's work. Our core work includes training, policy, research and consultancy.

This guide was produced within the Combat Misconduct project. Combat Misconduct is a partnership between AVA, [NUS](#) and [UUK](#) aiming to improve university responses to sexual misconduct. The project is funded by [Rosa](#), the UK fund for women and girls. For more information about the project, visit [www.avaproject.org.uk/combatmisconduct](http://www.avaproject.org.uk/combatmisconduct).

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**1. Learning** to understand violence against women and girls, challenge gender inequality and build respectful relationships:

- AVA's Combat Misconduct Resource Hub (coming soon) has tailored resources for understanding sexual misconduct and other forms of gender-based violence for university staff and students.
- AVA's [Ask AVA](#) online platform is full of useful resources and guidance for understanding violence against women and girls and healthy relationships.

**2. Safeguarding** to support people that experience forms of violence against women and girls:

- AVA's quick guide to managing disclosures (coming soon) will support university staff to be able safely manage disclosures of sexual misconduct.

**3. Engaging** key players, including staff, students and leadership to actively prevent violence against women and girls:

- AVA's Toolkit for vice-chancellors, principals and senior leaders provides peer-to-peer advice for university leaders in tackling sexual misconduct, harassment and all forms of hate.
- AVA's Combat Misconduct Resource Hub (coming soon) has tailored resources for university staff and students.
- AVA's quick guide to consulting with students and survivors of gender-based violence and abuse provides key principles to meaningful and safe collaboration.

**4. Campaigning** to stop violence against women and girls:

- AVA's Combat Misconduct Resource Hub (coming soon) has tailored resources and guidance to support students and staff to campaign against gender-based violence and abuse.

**5. Partnership** working to incorporate expertise:

- AVA's Combat Misconduct project has been produced in partnership with the [NUS](#) and [Universities UK](#) and has benefitted from their expert input.
- Recommendations from [University UK's Changing the Culture Taskforce](#) - examining violence against women in girls at universities - include the need for universities to work with external services that are experts in violence against women and girls
- Working alongside an external agency with expertise in violence against women and girls can help to build robust policies and processes that tackle this at your institution. AVA can provide consultancy support. For more information, contact [combatmisconduct@avaproject.org.uk](mailto:combatmisconduct@avaproject.org.uk)

**6. Institutionalising** to embed a comprehensive prevention programme:

- Crucial to preventing violence against women and girls is organisational culture change
- AVA's Toolkit for Vice-Chancellors, and [University UK's Changing the Culture Taskforce](#) highlight the key role university leadership have in embedding culture change across an institution

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