



NUS

National University
of Singapore

Report on Complaints of Sexual Misconduct (1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)

31 December 2020

Office of Student Conduct

Office of Risk Management and Compliance

This report contains information about sexual misconduct. Anyone affected by the contents may wish to access the support below:

1. [NUS Victim Care Unit](#) (for Students)
 - Helpline: 66014000
 - Email: vcu_help@nus.edu.sg

2. [Employee Assistance Programme](#) (for Staff)
 - Helpline: 800-130-1950
 - Email: support@resourcesforyourlife.com

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FOREWORD

A holistic approach to tackling sexual misconduct

Sexual misconduct is a growing concern for universities around the world. In 2019, Harvard University received about 500, Yale University received about 298, and Stanford University received about 187 complaints of sexual misconduct. The Red Zone report published in 2018 highlighted an Australian Human Rights Commission Survey which had found that in 2015-2016, approximately 200 sexual assault cases had occurred within a university setting each week in Australia. The Singapore Ministry of Education reported that in 2015-2017, the six local universities handled a total of 56 student-related disciplinary cases involving sexual misconduct. Of the 56 cases, 25 were from the National University of Singapore (NUS).

We are taking a holistic approach towards addressing sexual misconduct. We recognise the importance of raising awareness in the NUS community, enhancing infrastructure for better campus safety, instituting a strict framework for disciplinary sanctions, and offering comprehensive victim support.

Instituting a fair and transparent process

It is important that every incident of sexual misconduct be managed in a just and sensitive manner, guided by the principles of fairness and neutrality. Each complaint is taken seriously and investigated thoroughly following due processes.

More individuals are coming forward to file reports against alleged perpetrators of sexual misconduct. No student or staff should suffer in silence. NUS will continue to strive to provide a safe and conducive platform for affected

parties to verbalise and share their experiences and come forward in confidence.

Building a culture of respect as top priority

Sustained education is critical to addressing the incidence of sexual misconduct on our campuses. Currently, all students and staff undergo training on matters of respect and consent. We will soon introduce refresher courses to reinforce the ongoing training programme and bystander training to emphasise the important role and social responsibility of bystanders.

Caring for victims

The Victim Care Unit (VCU), which currently supports victims who are students, will be renamed the NUS Care Unit (NCU) in 2021. NCU will extend its care programmes to NUS staff by the second quarter of 2021.

Speedier police reporting

Under section 424 of the Criminal Procedure Code, NUS is required by law to report any arrestable offence listed. Such offences include voyeurism, outrage of modesty, and rape. The University is committed to filing a police report within two weeks of the conclusion of the Board of Discipline (BOD) hearing for student or Committee of Inquiry (COI) for staff cases. A police report may be filed earlier if circumstances warrant.

Periodic reporting

We will provide the NUS community with a report every six months on cases of sexual misconduct. We hope to strengthen and deepen trust as OneNUS, as we progressively introduce these measures in the months ahead.

INTRODUCTION: PUBLICATION OF ANNUAL REPORT

NUS is committed to cultivating a culture of respect and consent where all members of our community can safely and productively pursue their academic and professional aspirations. Community awareness and engagement are essential to the realisation of our commitment.

The publication of the annual report on complaints of sexual misconduct augments NUS' ongoing effort to raise awareness of sexual misconduct so as to meet the goals of deterrence and rehabilitation. There will be a regular six-monthly reporting henceforth.

This report includes both statistical and descriptive summaries of the complaints made to the University within this reporting period (1 January – 31 December 2020).

Due to privacy and confidentiality obligations, as well as to protect the identities of victims, and minimise re-traumatising of victims, this report cannot fully convey the variety and complexity of circumstances associated with cases that may appear similar in the brief narrative descriptions.

As a starting point, sexual misconduct refers to any act of a sexual nature committed against a victim through force, intimidation, manipulation, coercion, or without the victim's consent, or at a point when the victim is incapable of giving consent (e.g. under the influence of alcohol). It includes:

- Rape;
- Sexual assault;
- Intentionally inducing incapacitation of the victim with the objective of engaging in sexual conduct with the victim;
- Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature;
- Voyeurism;
- Taking up-skirt photographs or videos;
- Indecent exposure;
- Disseminating sexual/intimate information about the victim;
- Making unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favours;
- Sexually-related verbal or physical abuse;
- Involvement with any form of prostitution.

(The above list is non-exhaustive.)

This report assigns complaints based on the above categories.

Resources

Readers can find comprehensive information about NUS' statutes, regulations, policies, definitions and procedures at the Registrar's Office website:

<http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/administrative-policies-procedures/undergraduate/nus-statutes-and-regulations>

Readers can find the NUS Code of Student Conduct at the Office of Student Affairs' website:

<http://nus.edu.sg/osa/resources/code-of-student-conduct>

Readers can also find the NUS Code of Conduct for Staff at the following link:

<http://nus.edu.sg/docs/default-source/corporate-files/about/code-of-conduct-nus-staff.pdf>

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF PAST COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT (2016-2020) INVOLVING STUDENTS

Number of reports between 2016 and 2020

This section presents a brief summary of complaints of sexual misconduct involving students that were brought to the attention of NUS between 2016 and 2020. The tables and charts below include complaints that are currently pending investigations by the University.

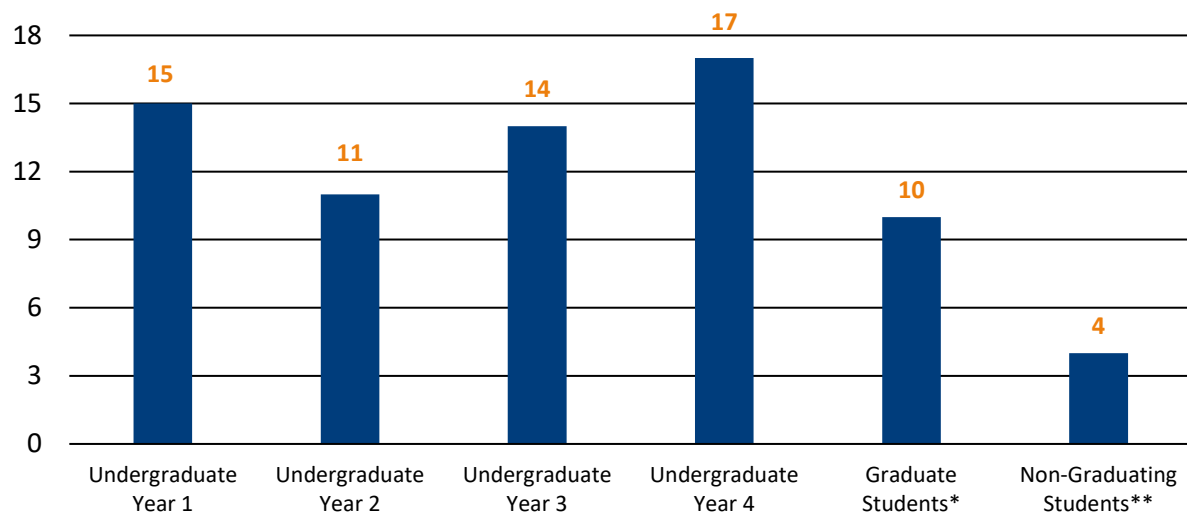
Table 1. Complaints of sexual misconduct by case outcome (adjudicated by the Board of Discipline (BOD), referred to Faculty for disciplinary action (Faculty), No Further Action due to insufficient evidence (NFA), or pending investigation).

Complaints of Sexual Misconduct by Case Outcome						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
BOD	12	9	7	9	5	42
Faculty	0	0	1	9	1	11
NFA	0	1	4	7	1	13
Pending Investigation	0	0	0	0	5	5
Total	12	10	12	25*	12	71

*In 2019, there was an increase in complaints of sexual misconduct. Majority of the complaints were made after the townhall meeting on sexual misconduct held in April 2019. 9 cases which were less serious were referred to Faculty for disciplinary action. NFA was taken for 7 cases due to insufficient evidence.

Accused’s year of study

Figure 1. Breakdown of complaints of sexual misconduct between 2016 and 2020 by the accused’s year of study.

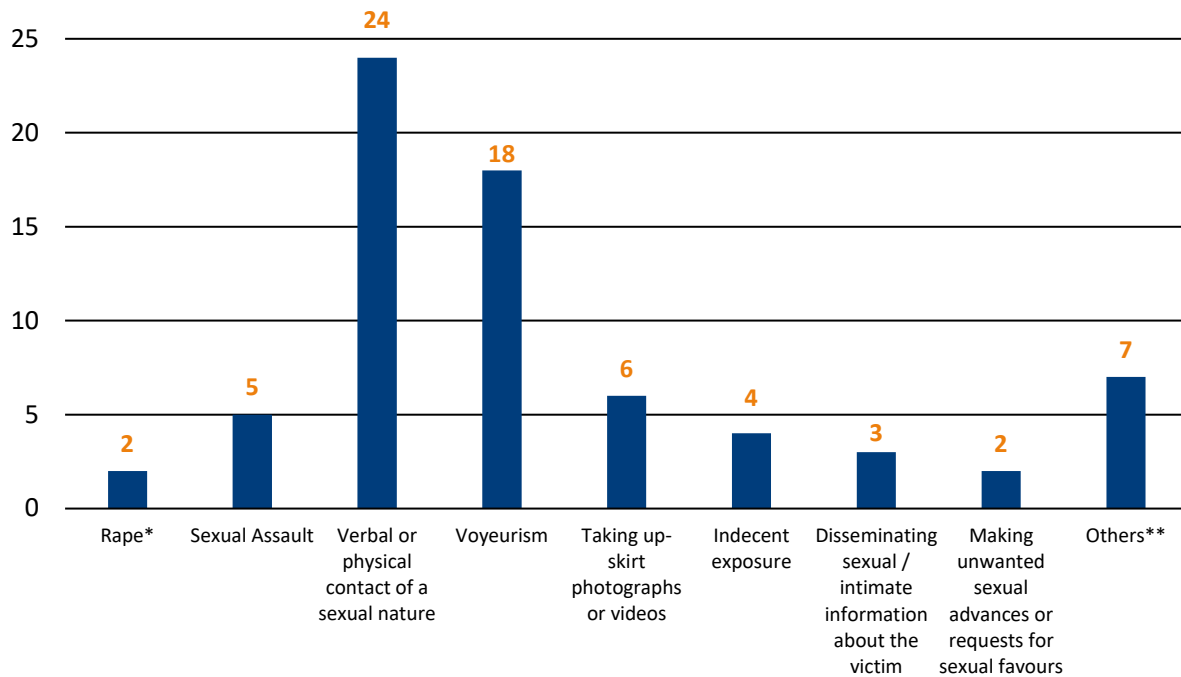


*Graduate students are students who are enrolled in Masters or PhD programmes.

**Non-Graduating students are students who are in NUS for exchange programmes.

Classification

Figure 2. Classification of complaints of sexual misconduct made between 2016 and 2020.



* The victims alleged that they had non-consensual sex. NFA was taken after investigations by NUS and the Police.

**Others include offences not in categories listed. All 7 complaints involved theft of undergarments.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF PAST COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT (2016-2020) INVOLVING STAFF

Number of reports between 2016 and 2020

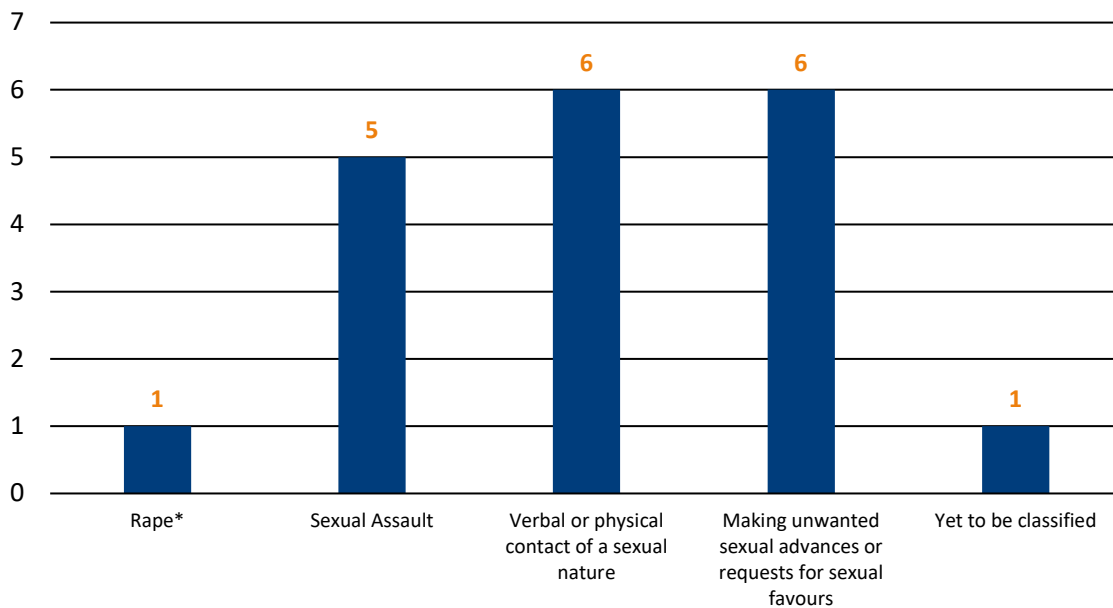
This section presents a brief summary of complaints of sexual misconduct involving staff that were brought to the attention of NUS between 2016 and 2020. The tables and charts below include recent complaints that are currently pending investigations by the University.

Table 2. Complaints of sexual misconduct involving staff and students, staff and staff, and staff and outsiders.

Complaints of Sexual Misconduct by Case Outcome						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Staff and Students	1	0	2	1	5	9
Staff and Staff	1	0	1	2	2	6
Staff and Outsiders	0	1	0	0	3	4
Total	2	1	3	3	10	19

Classification

Figure 3. Classification of complaints of sexual misconduct made between 2016 and 2020.



*The victim (an outsider) alleged that she had non-consensual sex. NFA was taken after investigations by NUS and the Police.

RESPONSE TO A REPORT OR COMPLAINT OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Upon receiving notice of a complaint or an allegation of sexual misconduct, our first priority is to address the safety and well-being of the victim. No-Contact Orders will be expeditiously served on the accused and the victim to prevent any harassment and intimidation between the parties involved.

The Provost is empowered to take summary action, such as withdrawal and/or suspension of any academic or non-academic university privileges, if he thinks that such urgent action is necessary to protect the interests of NUS or any student or staff of NUS, and/or to facilitate the smooth and/or proper functioning of NUS.

After the immediate needs have been met, the victim is supported by a Care Officer from the VCU and the accused is supported by a Support

Officer from the Office of Student Affairs (OSA). Where appropriate, professional counselling and psychiatric assessment and treatment will be provided by the University Counselling Services and the University Health Centre (UHC).

Internal investigations are undertaken by the Office of Campus Security (OCS) for complaints against students, and the Office of Risk Management and Compliance (ORMC) for complaints against staff. These investigations are separate and distinct from Police investigations. Once internal investigations are completed, the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) (for complaints against students) and the ORMC in consultation with the Office of Human Resources (OHR) (for complaints against staff) will assess the investigation papers and make recommendations to NUS senior management on the disciplinary measures to be taken, if necessary. These measures may include referral to the Faculty or BOD (for students) and COI (for staff).

INVESTIGATION PROCESS FRAMEWORK

Complaints of sexual misconduct are reported to OCS (for complaints against students) and ORMC (for complaints against staff) for investigations to be conducted in accordance with the Investigation Process Framework as illustrated below in Table 3.

Table 3. Investigation Process Framework

Major Activity	Details
1. Trigger Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipt of First Information Report (FIR) of a sexual misconduct. • Open Investigation Papers – OCS (for student) and ORMC (for staff). • Preliminary assessment of case conducted.
2. Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine context of the FIR. • Determine if No-Contact Orders need to be served on the accused and the victim. • Inform VCU to support the victim. • Inform OSA to support the accused (for student).
3. Investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather evidence. • Conduct interviews with the accused, the victim and other witnesses. • Obtain corroborative evidence (if any). • Check with the victim if a police report has been made.
4. Interim Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide interim update to the victim, the accused and other relevant stakeholders.
5. Finalise Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise the Investigation Papers. • Assess the Investigations Papers and make recommendations to senior management on the disciplinary measures to be taken. Measures include referral to the Faculty or BOD (for students) and COI (for staff).
6. Reportable Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if alleged offence is reportable to the Police. • Work with VCU and the victim on reporting the case to the Police if victim has not lodged the police report. NUS will lodge a police report if the victim is not willing to do so.
7. Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage internal queries if any.
8. Case Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check if the accused appeals against his sanctions to the Dean of the Faculty or Disciplinary Appeals Board (DAB) (for students), or to the President, the Provost or the Appeals Committee (for staff). • After the appeal or if there is no appeal, close and archive the case. • Update investigations dashboard.

INITIATIVES TO BUILD A CULTURE OF RESPECT AND CONSENT

Currently, all students and staff undergo mandatory training on respect and consent. The breakdown of the number of students and staff who have completed the Respect and Consent module is as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Breakdown of completion rate for Respect and Consent module by the University (accurate as of 31 December 2020).

Respect and Consent Module for Students	
Type of Student	Number of students completed
Staying on Campus (Hostel/Residential Colleges) (face-to-face workshop and e-module)	7,274 / 7,274 (100%)
Not staying on Campus (e-module)	21,899 / 22,726 (96.3%)
Total	29,163 / 30,000* (97.2%)
Respect and Consent Module for Staff	
Total	11,141 / 13,263** (84.0%)

*Total number represents AY2020/21 Semester 1 student enrolment.

**Total number represents AY2020/21 Semester 1 full-time staff.

The University will soon introduce refresher courses to reinforce the ongoing training programme as well as a new bystander training to emphasise the important role and social responsibility of bystanders in tackling sexual misconduct. In addition, workshops such as First-Responder Training are held to strengthen the training for staff such as Heads of Departments who are likely to be the first-responders in incidents of sexual misconduct. To date, 284 staff have been identified and trained. These sustained efforts aim to foster a safe and respectful campus environment.

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN 2020 – INVOLVING STUDENTS

S/N	Date of FIR to OCS	On/Off Campus	Type of Offence	Description of Offence	Disciplinary Action and Sanctions	Police Report
1	8-Feb-20	On Campus	Others - Theft of female undergarments	The male accused committed trespass into multiple female rooms in a student hostel to steal female undergarments. The male accused also masturbated on some of the undergarments.	The case was adjudicated by the BOD. The BOD mandated for a psychiatric report from the UHC. In view of his psychiatric condition, the BOD suspended him for 6 semesters and referred him to the UHC for follow-up assessment and treatment. He was also barred from campus during the period of suspension and received an official letter of reprimand.	Yes
2	19-Feb-20	On Campus	Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature	Both parties are male students. At the material time of the two incidents, both were friends. In the first incident at the accused's room in a student hostel, the accused asked to see the victim in the nude, and both also held onto each other's private parts. In the second incident at the same location, the accused and the victim took a shower together. After the second incident, the victim requested to join a tutorial group that was run by the accused as a student tutor.	No-Contact Orders were issued to both students. Investigations established that the acts prior to the victim joining the tutorial group were consensual and NFA was taken. Since then, new information has been provided by the victim and the case is pending further investigation by OCS.	Yes
3	24-Feb-20	On Campus	Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature	The male accused and the female victim were friends at the material time of the incident. On the day of the incident, both of them drank alcoholic drinks and slept together in a student hostel room belonging to a mutual friend. The accused first squeezed the victim's breast when they were sleeping and he stopped after she told him not to touch her. When they woke up, the accused touched her buttocks when she was preparing to leave the room. The victim made a police report and the mutual friend sent a photo of a knife to her which she perceived as a threat to drop her complaint against the accused.	No-Contact Orders were issued to all three students. This case is pending BOD adjudication for the accused and the mutual friend.	Yes
4	7-Mar-20	On Campus	Voyeurism	The male accused trespassed into female toilets at a student hostel multiple times over a span of a few months, and committed voyeurism by installing two pin-hole cameras disguised as smoke detectors in the shower cubicles.	Summary Action was issued to suspend the student. This case was adjudicated by the BOD. The accused's candidature was terminated. The accused appealed to the Disciplinary Appeals Board (DAB), and his appeal was dismissed.	Yes

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5	16-Apr-20	Online	Disseminating sexual / intimate information about the victim	The male accused downloaded two photos of a female student modelling lingerie on a website accessible to the public and sent them to a Telegram chat group. The victim felt sexually harassed as the photos were posted without her consent.	No-Contact Orders were issued to both students. The accused was referred to his Faculty for disciplinary action. He received an official letter of reprimand and was mandated to write a letter of reflection for his actions.	Yes
6	7-Jul-20	Online	Disseminating sexual / intimate information about the victim	The male accused and the female victim were in a prior boyfriend-girlfriend relationship. After she broke up with him, he made repeated threats to distribute her nude photos to her family and friends, and to post them on social media. He also sent her one of the nude photos. The nude photos were taken from a video he filmed earlier in the year, when she was under the influence of alcohol and he had changed her out of her clothes.	No-Contact Orders were issued to both students. The case was adjudicated by the BOD. The BOD suspended the accused for 6 semesters with 120 hours of community-based sanction and mandated counselling. The accused was barred from campus during the period of his suspension, mandated to write a letter of reflection to the BOD for his actions, received an official letter of reprimand and mandated to attend rehabilitation and reconciliation sessions.	Yes
7	20-Jul-20	Off Campus	Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature	This case started with male student #1 alleging that male student #2 harassed him by posting racial remarks about male student #1 on Twitter. Male student #2 counter-alleged that during their first date, male student #1 touched and kissed him without his consent. After the first date, they did not keep in touch.	No-Contact Orders were issued to both students. Pending investigation by OCS.	Yes
8	12-Aug-20	On Campus	Others - Theft of female undergarments	At the time of the incident, the male accused was staying at a student hostel. CCTV footages showed him rummaging through a washer in a laundry room and leaving with a brassiere that belonged to the female victim. After 15 minutes, he returned the brassiere to the same washer. However, he then changed his mind and retrieved the same brassiere again and brought it back to his room.	The case was adjudicated by the BOD and adjourned pending receipt of a psychiatric report.	No
9	8-Sep-20	Off Campus	Sexual Assault	The accused is a female student who is alleged by her former boyfriend of having sexual intercourse with him against his will on multiple occasions. Her former boyfriend is not an NUS student.	This case is pending investigation by OCS.	No
10	8-Sep-20	On Campus	Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature	The male student and female student were friends at the time of the incidents. The male student alleged that the female student harassed him by disclosing to others that he had undergone circumcision. The male student had also disclosed this information to others. Their friendship turned sour and when the female student did not want to communicate	No-Contact Orders were issued to both students. The male student was referred to his Faculty for advisory and counselling. NFA was taken against the female student as the allegations against her were unsubstantiated.	Yes

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				with him anymore, he persisted in sending text messages to her and the female student felt harassed.		
11	23-Nov-20	On Campus	Voyeurism	The first victim, a female student, discovered that the accused, a male student, was filming them engaging in sexual intercourse without her consent. Investigations revealed there was a second female victim who was also filmed when she was having sexual intercourse with the accused.	Summary Action was issued to suspend the accused. No-Contact Orders were also issued to all three students. This case is pending investigation by OCS.	Yes
12	16-Dec-20	Online	Making unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favours	This is a case involving a male student who asked a female student for a one-night-stand. The female victim complained of sexual harassment.	No-Contact Orders were issued to both students. This case is pending investigation by OCS.	No

PRE-2020 COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT HEARD BY BOD OR DAB IN 2020 – INVOLVING STUDENTS

In 2020, there were three other cases that were adjudicated by the BOD and DAB where the complaints of sexual misconduct were made prior to 2020. They are as follows:

S/N	BOD/DAB Date	Description of Offence	Disciplinary Action and Sanctions
13	6-Nov-19 (BOD); 4-Mar-20 (DAB)	Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature The accused is a male student and the victim is a female student. After a drinking session, the accused accompanied the intoxicated female student back to her room at a student hostel. While in her room, he touched her private parts without her consent.	The BOD suspended the accused for 3 semesters with 120 hours of community-based sanction and mandated counselling. He was also issued a No-Contact Order to prevent him from contacting the victim. The accused filed an appeal as he maintained that the incident was consensual. The DAB dismissed the accused's appeal.
14	21-Oct-19 (BOD); 17-Jan-20 & 15-Apr-20 (DAB)	Voyeurism The accused is a male student and he was invited to study at the common area of his female friend's student hostel. He filmed his female friend and another female student on separate occasions when they were showering.	The BOD suspended the accused for 4 semesters with 120 hours of community-based sanction and mandated rehabilitation and reconciliation sessions. He was also issued No-Contact Orders to prevent him from contacting the victims. The DAB increased his suspension to 5 semesters.
15	22-Jan-20 (BOD); 02-Sep-20 (DAB)	Taking up-skirt photos or videos The accused is a male student and he was discovered by a female student when he was taking an upskirt video. Police investigations revealed that he had taken 31 upskirt videos of multiple women at places including the NUS campus and MRT station.	The BOD terminated the accused's candidature. The DAB dismissed the accused's appeal.

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN 2020 – INVOLVING STAFF

S/N	Date Reported	On / Off Campus	Type of Offence	Description of Offence	Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions	Police Report
1	28-Feb-20	On Campus	Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature	The victim, a male postgraduate student, reported that he had been sexually harassed by an administrative staff on 10 January 2020 when he went to the administrative unit to collect his misplaced mobile telephone. The victim alleged that the accused reached out to touch his genitals and told him “not to lose that”.	Investigation was completed on 25 March 2020. The accused admitted to touching the victim’s pocket of his pants in a joking manner. He did not admit to touching the victim’s genitals. Disciplinary actions taken against the accused included a final written warning as well as no salary increment and performance bonus for two years.	No
2	15-Mar-20	On Campus	Making unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favours	The victim, a male undergraduate, lodged a complaint against a lecturer for inappropriate behavior. The victim alleged that the accused was seeking a personal relationship with him and had inappropriately advised him to watch pornography as a remedy for his insomnia.	Investigation was completed on 5 May 2020. The accused breached the Code of Conduct for Staff by behaving unprofessionally and inappropriately. The employment of the accused was terminated.	No
3	18-May-20	Off Campus	Sexual Assault	A complaint was received involving a female undergraduate who had alleged that a lecturer had sexually assaulted and grievously injured her. The alleged victim denied making the complaint and she claimed that someone was using her name to make malicious allegations against several academics.	Investigation was completed on 22 May 2020. NFA was taken against the accused.	No
4	14-May-20	Off Campus (first accused) On Campus (second accused)	Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature	A research institute and OHR informed ORMC that the female victim (a staff) had lodged a report against the first accused (a staff) for outraging her modesty. The same victim made allegations of sexual harassment against another staff (the second accused) in the same institute.	For the first accused: Investigation was completed on 27 May 2020. NFA was taken pending police investigation. Subsequently, the Police informed that NFA was taken against the accused. For the second accused: Investigation was completed on 27 July 2020. Investigation revealed that both had quarrelled with one another and the victim mischaracterised the accused’s actions as sexual harassment. NFA was taken against the accused.	Yes (first accused) No (second accused)

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5	27-Aug-20	Off Campus	Sexual Assault	<p>On 27 August 2020, female student #1 reported to student hostel that a lecturer in the College had made inappropriate sexual advances to her and forcefully kissed her while they were at her home. The accused was suspended on 31 August 2020 pending investigation.</p> <p>On 7 September 2020, female student #2 reported to ORMC that the same accused made inappropriate sexual advances towards her and they had a sexual relationship for a period of time.</p>	No-Contact Orders were issued to the accused and the two students. Investigation was completed on 5 September 2020 (for female student #1's complaint) and 21 September 2020 (for female student #2's complaint). The accused was dismissed by NUS on 7 October 2020 for professional misconduct and a Police report was lodged by NUS on 21 October 2020.	Yes
6	18-Aug-20	On Campus	Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature	<p>On 18 August 2020, the Whistle Blowing Unit (WBU) received an anonymous complaint that a professor had made sexual advances to a student.</p> <p>The case was referred to ORMC on 2 September 2020.</p>	No-Contact Orders were issued to the accused and the victim. Investigation was completed on 7 October 2020. A COI was formed to hear the case. The accused was dismissed by NUS on 1 December 2020 for sexual misconduct.	Yes
7	14-Oct-20	On Campus	Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature	<p>On 14 October 2020, a female staff reported that a male staff had outraged her modesty by touching her buttocks on two occasions and sent her inappropriate text messages.</p> <p>She made a police report on 14 October 2020.</p>	No-Contact Orders were issued to the accused and the victim. Investigation was completed on 11 November 2020. A COI was formed to hear the case. The employment of the accused was terminated by NUS on 9 December 2020 for professional misconduct.	Yes
8	14-Nov-20	Off Campus	Making unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favours	<p>On 14 November 2020, WBU received an anonymous complaint alleging sexual misconduct against a Head of Department. The complainant alleged that the Head of Department had sent her sexually suggestive text messages. Subsequently, the text messages became more serious and included hints of having an affair with her.</p>	Investigation was completed on 15 December 2020. NFA was taken as the complainant could not be contacted for verification.	No
9	2-Dec-20	Off Campus	Yet to be classified as investigations are still in progress	<p>On 2 December 2020, WBU received a complaint of sexual misconduct by 2 staff. The complainant alleged that both staff were having sex with a former student on the basis of sex-for-grades.</p>	Pending investigation.	No

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10	2-Dec-20	Off Campus	Sexual Assault	The complainant, a graduate, alleged that a lecturer had an affair with a former student.	Investigation was completed on 11 December 2020. The complainant and the former student could not be identified. Additionally, the complainant stated that the alleged affair took place after the student had graduated. NFA was taken.	No
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