Supporting students who are sexually harassed on placement
A case study from youth work field education

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Summary: This paper argues that if higher education institutions are going to place students at risk of sexual harassment by requiring they complete a component of their formal study on work-place based placements, then university educators have a responsibility to adequately equip and appropriately support students so they can effectively identify and respond to sexual harassment. A model from youth work field education is presented that aims to prepare graduates, agency supervisors and university-based field education staff who are capable and motivated to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the practicum. The systemic and integrated framework recognises student's fundamental right to safety in the workplace and attends to the constraints on students disclosing, the deleterious effects of experiencing unwanted sexual conduct, and the importance of good practices in care and support. The various components of the approach also take account of the influence of environmental factors as well as issues of educational merit. The model has general applicability to other professional practice domains and can be adapted for use by educators who appreciate the value of equipping students to effectively deal with unwelcome sexual conduct while on placement.

Keywords: sexual harassment; field education; youth work

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Introduction

It is surprising that the role of universities in supporting students who are sexually harassed while on workplace-based placements has received little formal attention in light of the increasing number of university students doing practicums in industry settings and the prevalence of sexual harassment in workplaces. Field education now features in many professional degree programs and while on practicum students, particular women, witness and experience sexual harassment (Patrick et al., 2009; Mama, 2001; Risley-Curtiss & Hudson, 1998). The youth work program in which I teach provides an example of this, where female students recorded unwelcome sexual conduct from workers and service users in their field education journals. This paper explores how universities can develop student's capability to identify and respond to sexual harassment, and support students who witness or experience sexual harassment on placement.

There are good reasons for educating students for work with sexual harassment. Universities have legal, moral and pedagogical responsibilities to support students who are sexually harassed during their practicum (Barlow & Hall, 2007; Bogo & Vayda, 1998; Cooper & Briggs, 2000). This includes an obligation to attend to the safety and educational concerns of particular populations of students, and in this instance women and younger students who are more likely to be sexually harassed compared to their male and older counterparts (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008a). There are adverse personal and professional consequences from being sexual harassed; distress, fear and self-blame can follow and it can lead to health and relationship problems. For students on placement it can disrupt their learning and subsequently their career development and future employment. Universities and agencies could also be liable for medical costs and risk legal action by students who are sexually harassed, which could be avoided if student's safety and support is adequately attended to. Moreover if universities are serious about delivering quality educational opportunities via work integrated learning then student's safety and well-being when on field education needs to be a priority. Students have a fundamental right to learn in safe and supportive environments and to be treated with respect, including when they are doing internships, and promoting and providing such learning environments is an essential

function of universities (The Student Learning and Support Services Taskforce, 2003; Tully et al., 1993).

Universities also have a responsibility to prepare 'work-ready' graduates who are capable and motivated to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the workplace. This is particularly significant in the case of human service professionals such as youth workers and social workers who may work with perpetrators and survivors of sexual harassment, and need to be skilled in appropriate intervention techniques (Cleak & Wilson, 2007; Dunkel et al., 2000; Maidment, 2003). Being sexually harassed can also negatively affect the quality of student's work performance, which could have detrimental implications for the people they are working with (Stanley & Goddard, 2002). And attention needs to be given to teaching practices and learning experiences if we are to equip graduates who are capable of protecting and advocating for themselves and their clients, and educators have a responsibility to model appropriate interventions when supporting students who have been sexually harassed while on placement.

Rosenthal Gelman (2004) argues that the way universities and agencies handle incidents of sexual harassment against students influences students' experience of it as well as their perceptions and level of comfort towards doing similar work again. In other words, the harmful affects of sexual harassment can be mediated and mitigated by appropriate quality interventions (Pratt & Barling, 1988). This paper offers a case study from youth work field education where such innovations are taking place. It is a model that can be adapted for use in other discipline areas, such as teacher training and medical internships, where staff appreciate the pedagogical value of equipping students to effectively deal with unwelcome sexual conduct at work. Along with the relevant literature I draw on the field education journals of youth work students whom I teach to examine student's experiences of sexual harassment while on placement. I then report on the teaching and learning activities I have developed that are designed to educate youth work students to effectively identify and respond to sexual harassment. The ways in which students are actively engaged to enhance learning are documented.

This coursework is just one component of the approach described herein that aims to support students who are sexually harassed during practicum. I draw on frameworks for student support services as well as codes of practice for effectively preventing and responding to

sexual harassment to articulate a strategy that includes professional development for staff, online resources for students and field educators, and support for agencies to develop sexual harassment policy and procedures (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008b; Dunkel et al., 2000; Department of Education, 1998). It is a model that recognises the importance of quality relationships between students, teachers and agency supervisors for facilitating and dealing with disclosures of sexual harassment. Recommendations about how we can secure the delivery of good field education in universities that ensures students on placement are supported when sexual harassment occurs are provided.

University student's experiences of sexual harassment on placement

As mentioned students report witnessing and experiencing sexual harassment while doing practicum (Barlow & Hall, 2007; Ellison, 1996; Mama, 2001; Risley-Curtiss & Hudson, 1998; Tully et al., 1993). Youth work students in the field education courses I coordinate are required to keep reflective journals while on placement, which provide students a forum to document significant learning. 108 students wrote 585 journals during 2007 and 2008, and seven female students recorded experiencing and witnessing sexual harassment from workers and service users. This included workers talking about their sex lives, making sexually offensive comments, ogling young women, and inappropriately commenting on female service user's physical appearance. The youth work students also reported being harassed to go out on dates and provide their contact details by service users. The students also expressed feeling unsure of what to do as well as guilt; for example they wrote, 'did I bring this on myself?' and 'I should have set better boundaries'.

The literature as well as my research does not provide accurate data on the extent of the problem. Risley-Curtiss & Hudson (1998) was the only study among those identified that specifically asked students about sexual harassment on placement. They reported 24 per cent of 226 undergraduate and Master of social work students were sexually harassed in their field placement. Tully et al. (1993) reported one social work student (n = 121) experienced 'sexual advances' while

on placement, however the students surveyed in this study were not specifically asked whether or not they were subject to unwelcome sexual conduct or if they encountered behavior recognised as sexual harassment. This is a limitation shared by my account from youth work field education. Six students surveyed by Mama (2001) (n=37) reported experiencing 'sexual innuendo' and sexual propositioning from clients. The small sample size limits the reliability of the study for representing the extent on sexual harassment of students on placement.

In the absence of accurate data, statistics from other research could be interpolated to indicate just how many students could be experiencing sexual harassment while in the field. The Australian Human Rights Commission (2008a) identified 22 per cent of women and 5 per cent of men were sexually harassed in the workplace (N=2005). Maypole (1989) reported over one third (n=67) of the female social workers in his sample (N=188) had experienced sexual harassment at work and most commonly the perpetrator was an older male coworker in a senior position. The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (2008) identified 38 per cent of young women (N=1826) have unwanted sex, significant given many university students are also young people. This research points to a significant number of female students experiencing unwelcome sexual conduct during placement.

There is a need for further research to identify how many students are sexually harassed while on placement. At the same time, there are problems with gathering such data because students won't necessarily disclose for a number of reasons. The Australian Human Rights Commission (2008a) identified the large majority of sexual harassment goes unreported to employers and other bodies for a number of reasons including those who have been sexually harassed thinking it was not serious enough and lacking faith in the complaints process. Reporting sexual harassment also requires an understanding of what it is, and it can not be assumed students will know what behaviours constitute sexual harassment (Ramrathan, 2005). The Australian Human Rights Commission (2008a) reported there is a lack of understanding about what sexual harassment is. Research also indicates students might not disclose sexual harassment for fear of victimization, or they might believe they won't be taken seriously or will be branded troublemakers (Barlow & Hall, 2003a; Bishop, 2002; Ramrathan, 2005). And student might think if they disclose concerns or seek help they will be seen as incompetent and not coping (Fernandez, 1998; Fook et al., 2000).

Tully et al. (1993) add that 'because students are evaluated on their performance in their field practicum, they may be unlikely to report their experiences for fear of receiving a negative grade' (p. 192). Further, university students don't always seek help from university staff when they have problems (Barlow & Hall, 2003b; Clegg et al., 2006). Ralph et al. (2007) report almost 40% of a cohort of 226 student teachers encountered difficulties with university staff in charge of field education, and such poor quality relationships may also hamper students disclosing troubles. In other words, the lack of clear empirical data on the incidence of sexual harassment among students on placement does not indicate it isn't a significant issue, and appreciating the extent of the problem is difficult given the constraints on students disclosing.

A model for educating and supporting students on sexual harassment when in the field

As mentioned there are good reasons for universities to educate students on sexual harassment in the workplace prior to practicum and to support them when it occurs. This is a significant and complex issue requiring a sophisticated response that attends to the constraints on students disclosing, the deleterious effects of experiencing unwanted sexual conduct, and issues of educational merit. I draw on evidence and codes of practice for preventing and responding to sexual harassment and achieving equal opportunity for women in the workplace, as well as literature on quality teaching and learning and how students manage difficulties on placement, to develop a framework that integrates primary prevention, early intervention, intervention and postvention, or restoring well-being, oriented activities (Australian Human Rights Commission 2008b; Barlow & Hall, 2003b, 2007; Clegg, et al., 2006; Department of Education, 1998; Dunkel, et al., 2000; Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, 2010; Office of Women's Policy, 2009; RMIT University, 2010; The Student Learning and Support Services Taskforce, 2003).

What follows is a coherent, integrated and holistic multi-dimensional framework that takes account of the influence of environmental and cultural factors, the design of quality teaching and learning activities responsive to the context of field education, as well as practices of care

and support. The model also recognises student's fundamental right to safety in the workplace.

The core elements of the model are:

- policy
- online resources for staff and students
- curriculum materials
- educating university field educators
- supporting good practice in agencies
- quality relationships and safe, supportive and trusting learning environments
- complementing student's strengths
- appropriately resourced field education programs
- support from governments and industry
- addressing environmental factors that contribute to sexual harassment
- ongoing revision

Next the components of the approach and the key agents for their delivery are presented.

Policy

The model is framed by current legislation and government policy on sexual harassment, occupational health and safety, work integrated learning in universities, and human rights and equal opportunity. These shape university sexual harassment and field education policies and institutional arrangements, and together they inform the other activities of the framework that follow.

Online resources for staff and students

The first of these activities are online resources for university field education staff and students which provide a guide on what to do if sexual harassment takes place. Educators and students are alerted to the online resources before placements begin and can access them at any time. This is significant because some online course materials are only

available to students during the semester in which a subject is delivered, which is insufficient for field education courses where practicums take place any time of year. Both resources open with a clear statement that the university takes sexual harassment seriously, that sexual harassment is against the law and students have the right to be safe and free of sexual harassment when on placement. The resource for students provides definitions and examples of sexual harassment, and details a range of options that include dealing with the behaviour yourself, seeking advice from field educators and university staff, contacting university student support services, or calling the police. Students are also referred to the universities sexual harassment policy and related resources.

Equipping and motivating students to identify and respond to unwelcome sexual conduct takes more than university based teaching modules, and, in particular, attention needs to be given to other practices such as how universities prevent and respond to sexual harassment. Moreover, if we are to accept proponents of quality teaching and learning in higher education who argue students learn through experience, then educators need to 'practice what they teach' and guide students through appropriate responses if they are sexually harassed on placement and seek help. The resource for staff features a step-by-step guide on what they can do if a student seeks their help after being sexually harassed, such as talking about confidentiality, naming behaviours as sexual harassment, and finding out what, if any, agency-based response has been provided. Other suggestions include negotiating a safety plan, talking about placement continuation or termination, and discussing options with the student on what they could choose to do. Information on record keeping procedures and who can be consulted for expert advice is also included. Both resources emphasize the priority given to the safety of students while on placement, refer to the barriers for students in seeking help previously mentioned, and make suggestions regarding self-care and coping strategies (Barlow & Hall, 2003b).

Curriculum materials

Three on campus seminars designed to prepare students for youth work field education provide the opportune time for a tutorial that aims to develop the capability of youth work students to effectively identify and respond to sexual harassment. Preparatory reading is emailed

to students a week before an in-class activity. The reading material provides students an introduction to the definitions and behaviours that constitute sexual harassment, refers to relevant policy, and alerts students to the fact that sexual harassment is against the law and that students have a right to be and feel safe and free from unwanted sexual conduct when on placement (RMIT University, 2010; Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2008). The pre-workshop reading provides information on dealing with sexual harassment and gives students options for where they can make a complaint, get help and advice, which includes the universities role, what the agency should do, and what they could do. It also draws on the literature regarding what youth workers can do if they become aware clients are attracted to them (Victorian Legal Aid, 2007; YouthLaw, 2007). Reasons students might not disclose, as previously mentioned, are included, along with ideas for self-care and support.

The workshop begins by preparing students for the topic of discussion in recognition that students may have been subjected to sexual assault and harassment and that exploring this subject matter could be distressing. References are made to safety, disclosure, self care and follow up support. Next, the pre-workshop reading is discussed and students are invited to ask questions to clarify the material. What follows is a teaching and learning activity influenced by constructivist and experiential learning theory (Biggs, 2007; Fry et al., 2003). In other words, students are invited to understand, interpret and create meaning through their active participation in the learning process. Permission is obtained from students who have completed placement to use the journals they wrote documenting incidents of sexual harassment. All identifying information is removed from the journal entries, including the student's and agency's name. The journals are then circulated amongst students in the classroom and, using lessons from the pre-workshop reading, students are asked to discuss whether or not sexual harassment has taken place, and assess how the student and others responded. The class joins together in a project of mutual questioning, inquiry, speculation, reflection, and theorizing, as student learn to identify sexual harassment and what they and others can do if it occurs.

Using the journals written by students who have completed placement for teaching purposes has the added benefits of peer education. Youth work students yet to do placement read first hand accounts from others who have done their time in the field. Discussions on related topics are

also generated. For example, many youth work students can be of similar age to the young people they work with. While students could use this to assist with engagement, young service users might position students as peers, and not understand or appreciate the professional boundaries of the relationship. There may also be times students need to talk with young people about sex and sexuality issues, such as relationships and safe sex. Physical contact with service users might also take place, for example when attending to injuries or times a client is distressed and putting an arm around their shoulder or holding their hand occurs as a way to comfort them. In the workshop we discuss how these scenarios could lend themselves to sexual harassment, and explore what students could do in such instances. Following Goldblatt & Buchbinder (2003) & Stanley & Goddard (2002) the professional and personal implications of working with violence and sexual harassment are also explored. For example, experiencing sexual harassment can detrimentally impact on student's practice and contribute significantly to stress and burn-out. It can also result in students re-examining family of origin experiences and attributing new meanings to intimate relationships and gender roles. And the environmental factors that contribute to the perpetration of sexual harassment in the community sector, such as unequal power relations between men and women and inadequately resourced services. In other words, students are introduced to the idea that more than an individualized response is needed to end sexual harassment.

Such curriculum on sexual harassment is also integrated into other on-campus course work, such as that related to ethics, professionalism, legal and justice issues, working with perpetrators of violence and supporting survivors of abuse, managing professional and personal boundaries and other direct practice skills, and worker safety, stress management and self care.

Educating university field educators

To compliment the online resource for staff, field educators are offered professional development on preventing and responding to sexual harassment.

Supporting good practice in agencies

There is also a place for university field education staff to consult agencies about their equal opportunity, safety, supervision and critical incident policies and procedures as well as the training opportunities available to workers on the prevention and management of sexual harassment (Dunkel et al, 2000). Cherrey Reeser & Wertkin (2001), Maidment (2003) & Tully et al. (1993) identified agencies used as practicum sites often do not have policies on violence or student safety or do not inform students of these policies during orientation. Field educators and equity units at universities could work closely with agencies and provide specialist guidance and support in the implementation of up-to-date policy, procedures and continuing education opportunities, and can require that students are informed of these during induction.

Quality relationships and safe, supportive and trusting learning environments

The model also recognises the importance of safe, supportive and trusting learning environments as well as quality relationships between students, teachers and agency supervisors for facilitating and dealing with disclosures of sexual harassment (Bogo & Vayda, 1998). To be effective, the policy, online resource, training and other activities in the framework rest on learning environments and relationships characterized by mutual trust, approachability, honest communication, empathy, flexibility and prompt support that manage expectations, encourage help seeking and facilitate follow up. This is particularly critical in light of the underreporting by human service professionals of abusive incidents as well as the obstacles students face in disclosing sexual harassment.

As previously mentioned students report problematic and unsatisfactory relationships with agency supervisors and university staff in charge of field education and as a result choose not to seek help from them (Barlow & Hall, 2007, 2003b; Fernandez, 1998; Ralph et al., 2007). Given these people are responsible for delivering quality field education, which includes a legal, ethical and pedagogical duty of care to the safety and supervision of students, this is worrying and emphasizes that it is university educators and agency supervisors job – as much

as possible – to secure quality relationships with students so they feel comfortable to access them for support. According to Fortune et al., (2001) and Knight (2001) student's perception of and relationship with the agency supervisor is the most important contributor to a satisfactory placement and useful learning experience. Fernandez (1998) identified the qualities students look for in agency supervisors include someone who is 'skilful and competent in teaching, clear in expectations, fair in evaluation, supportive and nurturant…encouraging (of) independent thinking and granting them autonomy and self-determination' (pp.194-195).

Chickering and Gamson (1999) add good practice in undergraduate education encourages student-faculty contact, which can be constrained in field education courses because students and agency supervisors are primarily based in the workplace and can have minimal face-to-face interaction with university field education staff. Securing robust relationships and effective partnerships between stakeholders takes effort and resources, and youth work field educators use a range of strategies including negotiating and agreeing on structured learning contracts and supervision arrangements, being clear and providing written information about roles and responsibilities, liaison visits, integrative seminars, inviting student and agency-based field educators to contact university tutors whenever necessary, and providing prompt follow up at times they do. Universities providing professional development on quality supervision as well as recognition to agency supervisors could also assist.

Complimenting student's strengths

In some respects the framework also intends to compliment student's efforts in keeping safe and combating sexual harassment on placement. Barlow & Hall (2007, 2003b) and Murray-Harvey (1999) identified students use a range of coping techniques when faced with difficult situations in the field that included 'cognitive-behavioural strategies', such as altering their behaviour and positive self-talk, seeking assistance from agency supervisors, university educators, other workers and students, and family and friends, and remaining silent. Validating and supporting the ways students manage sexual harassment, such as drawing on informal supports, is important and the model does that

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by encouraging staff to consult and work with students when they seek help. At the same time Burke & Harris (1996) argue the family and friends of students might not know how to appropriately support students who are abused on placement. University field educators and agency supervisors should keep this in mind and consult students about whether informal supports are meeting their needs and should be complimented with professional help.

Using cognitive-behavioural strategies and remaining silent when sexually harassed may also not be enough on their own to reduce the risks associated with being sexually harassed. For example, they are unlikely to attend to the harmful personal and professional consequences associated with witnessing and experiencing unwelcome sexual conduct. Stanley & Goddard (2002) identified the importance of quality supports to reducing the negative effects of exposure to violence in the workplace. Clegg et al. (2006) however report that some students find seeking help from formal university student services such as counseling to be problematic because they associate doing so with failure and a loss of face and because it can diminish pride in their own coping skills and capacities. Encouraging strong and trusting relationships that enable help-seeking is not meant to diminish the capacity and strengths of students and agency-based supervisors to address incidents of sexual harassment themselves, without the need of seeking help from university staff or others. In many ways the model aims to support and values such resourcefulness and initiative.

Appropriately resourced field education programs

While the components of the framework I just described have educational merit and meet all the criteria for good practice in preventing and responding to sexual harassment, they make particular demands of university staff and workers who supervise students, and focus on the roles and responsibilities in the relationships among students, agency supervisors and university tutors, failing to mention other key stakeholders. Achieving the integrated framework I propose takes well resourced field education programs that provide university staff the training and time required to implement the various activities of the model and build the relationships with students and agencies critical for them to be of use. However, university-based field educators

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report demanding workloads and struggle to give field education the sustained level of commitment and attention it needs because of competing academic duties such as research, on-campus teaching and governance. Moreover involvement in field education programs is generally unrecognized and undervalued and this is an obstacle to any effort aimed at supporting students who are sexually harassed on placement (Cooper & Orrell, 1999; McCurdy & Zegwaard, 2009; Patrick et al., 2009; Universities Australia, 2008; Weisz & Smith, 2005).

Securing the delivery of good field education programs requires improving the status and value of being a field educator and this can be achieved through proper recognition in workload and promotion models. The quality relationships central to the framework also raises serious questions about the value and appropriateness of sessional staff to deliver field education, not to mention what constitutes reasonable class sizes in such courses. University budgets also need to match the rhetoric around producing 'work-ready' graduates and ensure adequate expenditure on field education programs.

Support from governments and industry

Governments are a key driver of work integrated learning and have a responsibility to equip universities and the community sector, including the youth sector, so they are able to provide safe and positive field education experiences. In Australia, the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and accompanying administration guidelines, which were most recently amended in 2007, require universities to provide direction to students learning and performance when engaged in work integrated learning to be eligible for Commonwealth Grant Scheme and HECS funding (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2008; Patrick et al., 2009). The criteria relate to the level of oversight, direction and management provided by universities and include improving and formalising support to students. The guidelines put pressure on universities to do more in relation to field education, which includes appropriately supporting students who are sexually harassed; however the Australian Government has not adequately invested in universities to cover associated ongoing costs, such as adequate funding for dedicated full-time tenured field education staff. Similarly, as Cleak & Wilson (2007) suggest, human service

professionals have to do 'more with less', limiting their capacity to provide viable placements that attend to the various activities of the framework described herein (Cleak et al., 2000). A well resourced community sector, which delivers better wages and conditions, safer workplaces, adequate staffing levels, quality supervision, and reasonable workloads, would assist agencies in implementing sexual harassment policy, procedures and training and allow agency supervisors to devote time to providing safe and supported learning experiences to students on placement (Maidment, 2003, Stanley & Goddard, 2002). And a youth work professional association, legislated by government and requiring curriculum standards for youth work education, could mandate the inclusion of the model in youth work courses.

Addressing environmental factors that contribute to sexual harassment

We should also not forget that ideally workplaces would be free of sexual harassment, and measures to support students who are sexual harassed such as those proposed within this paper would be unnecessary. Preventing sexual harassment therefore requires much more than what has been proposed so far. While equipping and supporting individual students, agency supervisors and university field educators is important, the environmental factors that contribute to and sustain sexual harassment need to be disrupted at the same time as practices that promote safety and respectful relationships are encouraged. For example, incidents of sexual harassment need to be properly managed and those who sexually harass others need to be held accountable for their behaviour and prevented from repeating the harassment, and behavior change programs could assist with this. Efforts to end sexual harassment should be coupled with well developed policy, legislation and programs interested in addressing broader cultures of violence and other forms of abuse such as workplace bullying as well as the cultural values and social attitudes that can contribute to such behaviour. Institutional inequities and structural imbalances between genders, ethnicities, sexualities, different age groups, and people with different levels of abilities should be addressed as these can contribute to discriminatory attitudes and unfair environments that can perpetuate sexual harassment. This includes the unequal distribution of power

and resources between men and women. And securing safe, caring and equitable communities that value diversity and appreciate social goods such as the right to live and work free from violence could also assist in discouraging sexual harassment. Policies, legislation and associated compliance mechanisms and codes of practice that aim to prevent sexual harassment, achieve safe workplaces, and promote equal opportunity for women in the workplace could also be strengthened by specifically including approaches for students on work experience.

Ongoing revision

Ongoing review, monitoring and evaluation of the framework is essential to the ensure the approach and its various methods and materials are responsive, up-to-date and draw on and refer to current evidence, policy and law.

Conclusion

This case study from youth work field education provided an integrated framework for educating for efficacy in the prevention and response to sexual harassment that has general applicability to other professional practice domains. University student's experiences of sexual harassment when in the field were reported and as many as a third of female students could be subject to unwelcome sexual conduct from clients and professionals while on placement. It was observed that many students may not disclose the abuse to formal university supports.

The model presented was grounded in codes of practice for effectively preventing and responding to sexual harassment and included policy and procedures, online resources, curriculum materials for students, professional development for staff, and support for agencies used as practicum sites. The importance of safe, supportive and trusting learning environments as well as quality relationships between students, teachers and agency supervisors for these activities to be of use was reiterated.

Following Maidment (2003) attention to the framework will hopefully prepare students for work with sexual harassment, help prevent cases of legal action from being taken against agencies and universities, and most

importantly, will contribute to student's and service user's safety. The educational merit of the various activities was also identified, as was the possibility that youth work student's commitment to a career in youth work could be fostered by universities and agencies appropriately responding to and supporting students who are sexually harassed.

The challenges for those responsible for developing student's capability to identify and respond to sexual harassment as well as support students who witness or experience sexual harassment while on placement were noted. Proper recognition for field educator's knowledge, skill, time and effort in university workload and promotion models was recommended, as was governments supporting the implementation of the model by adequately funding and regulating higher education and the youth sector. And explicitly including and targeting strategies for students on placement within government policies, audit frameworks and codes of practice aimed at preventing and responding to sexual harassment was proposed.

Further research is required to identify just how many students experience sexual harassment on placement, and also to evaluate how well the approach presented in this paper actually prepares students for identifying and responding to unwelcome sexual conduct in the workplace. And while the model meets all the criteria for good practice in preventing and responding to sexual harassment, further research on how students experience the various activities of the framework as well as their suggestions for changes and improvements could be useful. Further to this is the critical question of just how field education programs within universities should be funded to ensure students on placement are adequately supported when sexual harassment occurs.

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