

# I Heart Consent Pilot Report

**A look into the findings from our  
consent education workshops on  
campus**

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# Introduction

Last year the NUS Women's Campaign launched the I Heart Consent Campaign and worked with 20 students' unions to pilot consent workshops as part of a wider campaign to prevent sexual harassment and assault on campuses. The aim of the campaign was to:

- Educate students about consent in order to help create educational and social environments which are happier, safer and more inclusive.
- Combat rape culture and victim blaming by tackling myths, rectifying problematic perspectives of consent and helping students understand that sexual activity without consent is a crime in which only the perpetrator can be blamed.
- Empower students to create a positive consent culture by taking part in advocating access to inclusive sex and relationship education in universities, colleges and in schools.

This impact report provides an overview of the impact of the pilot scheme on campuses and the further development that NUS has taken from the feedback process.

Susuana Amoah  
NUS National Women's Officer

# Executive Summary

# Executive Summary

## About the Pilot

NUS women's campaign and Sexpression:UK came together in 2014 to create a consent education programme which aims to facilitate positive, informative and inclusive conversations and campaigns about consent in universities and colleges across the UK.

Sexpression:UK is a network of student based projects in UK universities with whom we worked to develop an I Heart Consent ambassador programme.

The ambassador programme aimed to train at least one consent ambassador in each Sexpression branch in the UK to lead on and develop workshop programmes and campaigns in their local universities and colleges. All ambassadors received training through an online skype course and were sent campaigning materials to use at their pilot union.

We chose 20 students' unions from Further and Higher Education to participate in a pilot scheme of the educational programme and provided guidance and support on programme development and implementation, from training to a campaign launch on campus.

These unions were then allocated a Sexpression *I Heart Consent* Ambassador to help develop and deliver consent workshop programme for students, more specifically aimed at new students and sport/societies presidents and executive members.

Throughout this we worked with all those involved to find out as much as possible about what was working in the programme, what needed to change and how we could develop it further. This summary pulls together our key findings from the feedback information received.

## Workshop facilitators

We provided 'train the trainer' sessions for those who were interested in facilitating consent workshops at their students' union.

52 evaluations were received from those who attended facilitator training sessions. Of those:

- 45 self-defined as women
- 4 self-defined as men

***80% agreed or strongly agreed that they had gained a better understanding of sexual consent from attending the training***

***81% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more confident to talk to others about sexual consent after attending the facilitators' training***

***82% felt more confident about facilitating workshops after the training***

Overall, facilitators rated the following as being the most useful components of the training:

- Opportunities to prepare and practice delivering sections of the workshop and receiving feedback
- Managing group dynamics/encouraging discussion and engagement/dealing with challenges
- Gaining knowledge about consent/myth busting/definitions

## Workshop participants

Across the pilot we received feedback from 333 participants who attended consent workshops run by their students' union. Of those,

- 120 defined as men
- 175 defined as women
- 2 defined as gender fluid/gender queer

***91 % agreed or strongly agreed that they had taken away a better understanding of sexual consent from the workshop***

***94% agreed or strongly agreed that the workshop provided a safe and comfortable environment to discuss sexual consent***

***88% agreed or strongly agreed that the workshops was inclusive of non hetero-normative relationships***

***87% would recommend the workshops for other students***

Those who attended the workshops felt that myth busting, learning about definitions and having a safe environment to discuss content were the overall most useful parts of the session.

# Pilot Feedback Summary

***"It has been really incredible, it has changed perspectives and ideas that individuals have had around consent."*** Pilot Union

Unions engaged in a variety of actions and tactics to broaden the learning around consent.

One union pitched consent workshops to their sports clubs and societies, which led to a large number of workshops being held across the union. Another had found linking the workshops to enrichment activities to be a helpful approach.

Some had promoted I Heart Consent through social media and others through connecting the campaign with other priorities relating to sexual harassment or equality and diversity. Having a visual presence through t-shirts, badges etc. which were used to raise funds for local services was helpful for one union. They also held a launch night, which helped promote the campaign and create an early buzz about it. All unions had developed links to local organisations and services.

Some felt that it was too soon to be able to get a full picture of the impact of the campaign, although some were able to see some changes already. One union reported that the response was hugely positive, and that ***"campaigns have provoked conversations about rape culture and slut shaming."***

*"The I Heart Consent campaign was launched to 350 society and sports committee members participating in small group workshops in September, followed by a photo campaign during the Fresher's Fair where students wrote down why they wanted consent education, and why they are feminists."*

*The campaign has been met with an incredibly positive reception, with hundreds of 'consent is asking everytime' badges being worn by bar staff, activities staff as well as students."*

*Officially endorsed by the Sussex Men's Rugby club, women's football, Sussex Saxons (American Football) - Tennis and other sports groups are now being trained to deliver the workshops to their clubs, as well as the training being delivered to Student Reps."*

- Lindsay, Sussex SU Activities-Officer

# Learning from the Pilot



## Learning from the Pilot

Overall, the feedback received during the pilot has been really positive and we are pleased that the workshops sessions and facilitator training has helped students to feel more knowledgeable and confident to talk about consent.

The following details developments to the campaign as we roll out I Heart Consent across the country, we will be:

- Making sure the programme strikes a balance for those who are very aware of the issues and may want more from the campaign and those who are new to the topic
- Ensuring the programme is inclusive for LGBT+ students and where appropriate developing tailored workshops
- Helping those who attend workshops make a commitment and take action to increase awareness across their union and institution
- Working to increase the number of people who define as men or as non-binary who take part in facilitator training and workshops
- Extending the range of activities and information so that some of the programme can be staggered across and to support follow-up learning opportunities

**For more information about the campaign and to get involved please visit:**

I Heart Consent @ NUS Connect

<http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/winning-for-students/women/i-heart-consent>

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/iheartconsent](http://www.facebook.com/iheartconsent)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/IHeartConsent](http://www.twitter.com/IHeartConsent)

Tumblr: [www.iheartconsent.tumblr.com](http://www.iheartconsent.tumblr.com)

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