



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY

External Review of Sexual Violence Policy 2024

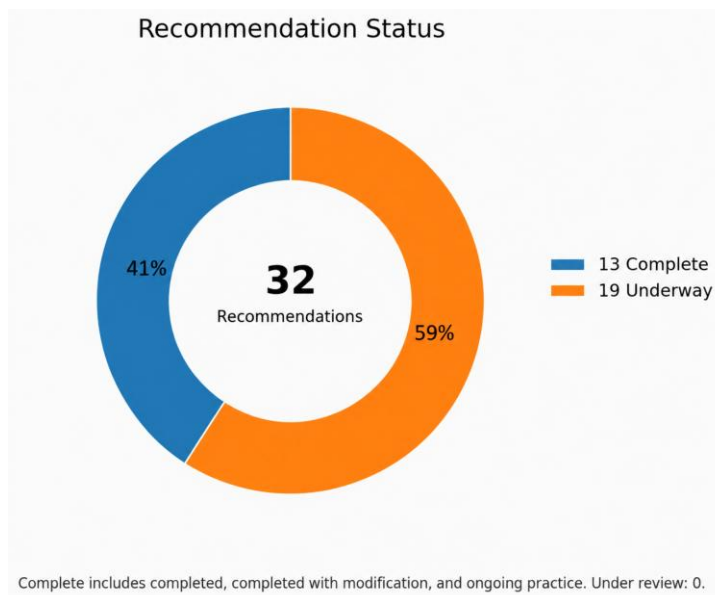
Action Plan Update — August 2026

Executive Summary

In 2024, St. Francis Xavier University commissioned an external review of its Sexual Violence Policy and related institutional practices. The review resulted in 32 recommendations addressing prevention and response, survivor supports, residence life, athletics and safe sport, counselling, policy and training, equity, communications, institutional accountability and public reporting.

This 2026 update reports on the University's response to all 32 recommendations, progress achieved to date, modifications made where StFX adopted a different approach to advancing the intent of a recommendation, and work that remains underway.

Progress at a Glance



- **13 of 32 recommendations are completed, completed with modification, or established as ongoing institutional practice.**
- **19 recommendations are actively underway, partially implemented, or in progress.**
- **No recommendations remain without an identified institutional response or implementation pathway.**

These categories are intentionally conservative. Several recommendations classified as underway already include substantial completed actions but require further implementation, evaluation, training or monitoring.

Key Areas of Progress

Prevention and education. StFX has expanded prevention and education capacity through the full-time Sexual Violence Prevention Education Coordinator (SVPEC), complementing the confidential support and advocacy provided by the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Advocate (SVPRA). Initiatives include the mandatory Consent is Visible@X module for new undergraduate students, Basic and Advanced Waves of Change, residence and student-athlete education, student-leader training, awareness campaigns and related prevention programming.

Policy and institutional practice. Recommended Sexual Violence Policy amendments have been completed, including changes concerning teaching-staff disclosure requirements, incapacitation and removal of “zero tolerance” language. A

consolidated Hazing Policy has been advanced to Senate for approval in Fall of 2026, with training and prevention work continuing. Regular Student Sexual Violence Response and Prevention Practice Reviews have also been established.

Athletics equity and safe sport. The Athletics Equity and Safe Sport process included external advisors. Women head coaches have been appointed, progress made toward more equitable game scheduling including continued advocacy with Atlantic University Sport, compliance with U SPORTS requirements for university-funded athletic financial awards for 2026–27, expanded prevention and safe sport training, and stronger Athletics–Student Services collaboration. The AESS Report and Implementation and Accountability Plan are being released alongside this update. Advancement and Athletics are also strengthening donor development and fundraising activity for women’s teams.

Residence culture and student support. Residence Life renewal has included professional and student staffing changes, peer leadership, restorative practices, community expectations and positive community-building. Annual residence damage costs declined by approximately 70% from 2022–23 to 2025–26, and 2026 Skyfactor results improved in 19 of 20 comparable factors including community culture indicators over 2024. An Assistant Residence Life Coordinator model will add targeted after-hours professional support in key areas.

Counselling, training and public accountability. Same-day/one at a time counselling has strengthened timely access to support, while work continues to expand specialized, trauma-informed and culturally responsive supports. Training for athletics, student leaders, faculty and employees continues to develop. StFX is also strengthening REES (Respect-Educate-Empower-Survivors) Online Reporting Platform promotion and evaluation, and updating its principled framework for sexual-violence-related communications.

Priorities for 2026–27

Priorities include continuing AESS implementation and evaluation; formalizing ongoing prevention and safe sport training; completing remaining Waves of Change requirements; deepening Residence Life–SVpra/SVPEC collaboration; evaluating new residence staffing approaches; strengthening specialized and culturally responsive counselling access; advancing faculty and employee education; further formalizing internal review processes; strengthening REES promotion and evaluation; and updating the University’s communications framework.

The University recognizes that completion of an action item is not the same as completion of the broader work of preventing and responding to sexual violence. Several recommendations require sustained education, monitoring, evaluation and attention to institutional culture and will therefore continue as ongoing institutional practices.

The condensed table that follows provides the original recommendation, a statement of progress or next steps, accountable owner(s), timeline and current status for each recommendation.

Condensed Recommendation-by-Recommendation Update

Status note: “Completed/Established” includes completed, completed with modification, and recommendations established as ongoing practice. “Underway” includes implementation underway, partially implemented, and in progress. The full 2026 Update Report is available on request. Email Elizabeth Yeo at eyeo@stfx.ca

#	Recommendation	Progress / Next Step	Owner(s)	Implementation Timeline/Next Review	Current Status
1	The Athletics Equity and Safe Sport Committee (or initiative) be chaired or directed by an external person, on a one-year timeline, to review relevant documents and create a plan of action. The resulting report, like Watershed’s, should be transparent, public and delivered to the President.	AESS external advisors appointed; AESS Report and Implementation and Accountability Plan developed and being released publicly with this update. Implementation and monitoring continue through the AESS plan.	VP Students VP Finance & Administration Athletics	Completed Sept. 2026; monitoring ongoing	Completed with modification
2	A structure be implemented to ensure an annual rotation of men’s and women’s games as the headliner at the StFX Homecoming.	Annual rotation process established with AUS and in place since November 2023.	VP Finance & Administration Athletics	Completed Nov. 2023; annual rotation ongoing	Completed as recommended
3	An equity initiative be immediately implemented in which the university imposes a requirement that a percentage of donations to men’s “top three” teams must be used to promote equity initiatives in athletics.	StFX will not redirect donor-designated gifts because they must be used for the donor’s specified purpose. Advancement and Athletics are instead expanding donor development and fundraising activity for women’s teams and will provide annual progress updates.	VP Advancement Athletics	Annual updates	Accepted with modification; underway
4	The Athletics Equity and Safe Sport Committee (or initiative) consider: -The implementation of a concrete strategy to ensure the hiring of one or more women head coaches at StFX in the next three years, as well as a concrete strategy to ensure the success of that coach in the critical first few weeks of her arrival, as well as thereafter. -Develop a proposal to present to the AUS leadership to revise AUS schedules/timetables to divide ‘prime time’ game times evenly between men’s and women’s sports in the AUS; -Undertake a detailed analysis of scholarships, including AAC and AFAs at StFX, to provide a rigorous review of the comparative funding of men’s and women’s teams.	While StFX was preparing to implement this recommendation, women were subsequently appointed as head coaches in varsity basketball and soccer through regular hiring processes, scheduling changes have been advanced and StFX continues to advocate with Atlantic University Sport for more equitable scheduling; and StFX is complying with the U SPORTS 45%/55% AFA distribution requirement for 2026–27. Continue monitoring, coach support and evaluation.	VP Finance & Administration AESS Human Rights & Equity Athletics	2026–27 / ongoing	Underway; several actions complete
5	Waves of Change Training be mandatory annually for both varsity and club coaches, trainers and assistant trainers for the next five years, to be completed in the fall term. The training may be modified or updated for staff who have taken the training multiple times.	Annual mandatory training model for coaches, trainers and related Athletics staff is being formalized, including participation expectations, completion tracking and integration with the Athletics calendar; hazing, anti-racism, power and equity content will continue to be embedded.	SVPR/ASVPEC Athletics HCAL Human Rights & Equity	2026–27 / ongoing annually	Underway
6	Waves of Change Training be mandatory for club athletes once per academic year, and for varsity athletes twice per academic year; once in August/September and a second time in the Winter term.	All varsity teams completed Basic Bystander in fall and Advanced Bystander in winter; 10 of 12 club sport teams completed Basic Bystander by March 2026. Complete training for remaining clubs and continue annual delivery.	Athletics HCAL SVPR/ASVPEC	Annual; 2026–27 cycle underway	Underway
7	For the next three years, the University administration require that the Director of Athletics and head coaches meet with the SVPR, Human Rights and Equity Advisor, Black Student Advisor, Indigenous Student Advisor, and	Three Athletics–Student Services leadership meetings occurred in each of 2024–25 and 2025–26. The broadened collaboration model is established; direct team-based introductions to Student Services advisors will be piloted.	VP Students VP Finance & Administration Athletics Student Services	Three times annually / ongoing	Completed with modification; ongoing

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	Gender and Sexual Diversity Advisor, and their relevant Directors, three times per year (summer, fall, and winter) to integrate these other University experts and services into the leadership training and development of student athletes, and to identify issues and their solutions. The meetings should be minuted with action items and follow-up.				
8	The SVPR, Human Rights and Equity Advisor, Black Student Advisor, Indigenous Student Advisor, and Gender and Sexual Diversity Advisor be integrated into the delivery of leadership training in the “Leadership Academy” for athletes.	Student-athlete onboarding has been broadened beyond the Leadership Academy to include orientation to equity, cultural and student-support resources for all student-athletes. Add direct team-based introductions to key Student Services staff.	Student Life Athletics Human Rights & Equity HCAL	2026–27 pilot; evaluation 2029–30	Underway
9	For the next four years (one generation), the football team be required to participate in the Waves of Change training in their residences, in order to redress the actual or perceived entitlement of these students within the residence community.	Training was broadened from football-only residence sessions to all new student-athletes, including football. Orientation-based and winter Advanced Bystander training are now part of the ongoing model.	Athletics Student Life HCAL	Annual / ongoing	Completed with modification; ongoing
10	The Athletics webpages and resource documents should clarify that the primary contact for all confidential disclosures of sexual violence is the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Advocate (SVPR).	First-round Athletics website/resource edits are complete. Complete second-round review and a clear graphic on disclosure/reporting pathways.	Human Rights & Equity Varsity Athletics Marketing & Communications	In progress; timeline to be confirmed	Underway
11	StFX should continue to disrupt traditions and behaviours that contribute to exclusion and incidents of harm, including revolving around conquests of women, naming traditions, and grooming first-years in upper-year partying.	Consolidated Hazing Policy complete and advancing through Senate in Fall of 2026; anti-hazing and positive-community education is embedded in Orientation and Athletics; residence access, harm reduction and Good Neighbours/high-impact-period work continue. Review StFX Alcohol Policy following provincial framework approval.	VP Students Student Life Finance & Administration	2026–27 / ongoing	Underway
12	In implementing Recommendation 11, StFX should invest in staffing and programming, including programming targeted at creating new forms of community-building between upper-years at StFX and the first years in residence.	Peer-leadership training and residence community-building have been strengthened; residence damage declined about 70% from 2022–23 to 2025–26 and Skyfactor improved in 19 of 20 comparable factors including indicators of community culture. Continue standardized peer-leader training, Assistant RLC pilot and community-building work.	VP Students Student Life	2026–27 / ongoing	Underway
13	StFX should continue to increase its staff complement of professional staff in residences, particularly RLCs.	Pilot an Assistant Residence Life Coordinator model in MacIsaac and Bishops to provide targeted evening/weekend professional support; evaluate safety, damage, staff support, student feedback and returner demand.	VP Students Student Life	Pilot begins Fall 2026; evaluation in 2026–27	Underway
14	Further to Recommendations 16 and 18 below, an expanded SVPR office should assist with residence by engaging in targeted follow-up, prevention and education at residences where harmful traditions persist and in better training and supporting CAs	Residence-focused SVPR/SVPEC prevention and education began in 2025–26. Establish a more structured joint planning and consultation model with Residence Life, including residence-specific prevention, referral pathways and CA support.	Student Life HCAL SVPR/SVPEC Residence Life	2026–27	Underway
15	StFX should have one consolidated policy prohibiting hazing, rather than separate Senate and Athletics policies. The Hazing Policy should expressly incorporate other relevant StFX policies. Hazing that would be captured by the Sexual Violence Policy should be disclosed to the SVPR and processed under that Policy; other hazing should be disclosed to a representative in	Consolidated Hazing Policy developed and advancing to Senate in Fall 2026. Provide policy-specific education and referral training for Athletics staff, coaches, captains, student leaders, residences and teams.	Student Life Athletics SVPR/SVPEC	Policy completed May 2026; training 2026–27 / ongoing	Underway training ongoing

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	Student Services identified by StFX and addressed under the Community Code of Conduct (in consultation with Athletics where a student athlete is involved))				
16	A second full-time SVPRA staff person should be hired, whose focus in the first few years should be prevention and education, including education with respect to the Policy. The SVPRA position should, like the first position, require expertise in sexual violence and trauma-informed practice, as well as skills or experience in education, communications, and training.	Full-time Sexual Violence Prevention Education Coordinator (SVPEC) hired in fall 2024.	VP Students HCAL	Completed Fall 2024	Completed as recommended
17	For the next two years, StFX should establish a summer student position of no fewer than 20 hours per week to support the work of the SVPRA, including to develop and deliver the Waves of Change training commencing in August and September of the following term.	Instead of a temporary summer student role, StFX created a full-time SVPEC position and continues a part-time Visible@X student coordinator to support peer education and fall preparation.	VP Students HCAL SVPRA/SVPEC	Ongoing	Completed with modification
18	Assign the new SVPRA (Note: the new role is SVPEC; not SVPRA) the role of working with communities, such as CAs in a residence, a residence community, or the athletics community, to de-escalate, and educate in response to, or in the context of, incidents of sexual violence	SVPRA and SVPEC roles are differentiated: confidential survivor support/advocacy and prevention education/community follow-up. The Year 1 plan included continued mandatory Consent is Visible@X for new undergraduates, Waves of Change, residence and athletics outreach. Further define community-based follow-up and consultation.	HCAL SVPRA/SVPEC Student Life Residence Life Athletics	2026–27 / ongoing	Underway
19	Require RLCs to include the SVPRA (Note: the new role is SVPEC; not SVPRA) in residence staff meetings, at least once per semester to educate, debrief and provide support.	Regular SVPRA/SVPEC engagement with Residence Life staff meetings began in January 2026. Clarify the ongoing meeting model and how Residence Life requests support following incidents or harmful community impacts.	Student Life HCAL SVPRA/SVPEC Residence Life	2026–27 / ongoing	Underway
20	Assign one or more members of the counselling team to meet at regular intervals with student residence staff of each residence as a group to debrief and provide support.	Responsive support model established: same-day/one at a time individual counselling is available to residence staff and group debriefs are offered after high-impact incidents where appropriate.	HCAL Residence Life	Ongoing	Completed with modification; ongoing
21	Establish a Sexual Violence Internal Review Team to meet at regular intervals to share anonymized information and to discuss, with a focus on procedure and practice, what issues/incidents have arisen or been disclosed, the nature of the incidents, the presence of any existing or emerging risk factors or trends on campus, and whether communications or procedures need to be refined, considered or addressed	Twice-yearly Student Sexual Violence Response and Prevention Practice Reviews are established. Formalize membership, cadence, documentation/privacy expectations and consider an annual Responsible Authority Practice and Policy Review.	HCAL VP Students SVPRA/SVPEC Responsible Authorities	Twice annually / ongoing	Underway
22	StFX prioritize publishing annual data on sexual violence disclosures and reports, detailed to the extent possible while complying with privacy legislation.	Public Education and Prevention reporting is established. Consider annual data relative to privacy safeguards.	HCAL SVPRA/SVPEC VP Students	Fall 2026; annual thereafter	Underway
23	The President attend the President's SVPR Committee meeting at least once per year, to receive and discuss the SVPRA's annual report and prioritize resources and initiatives, including implementation of the recommendations in the IRP report.	The President attended the annual Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Committee meeting in 2025; this is established as an annual practice.	President HCAL	Annual	Established ongoing practice

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24	The IRP recommends that s.14.12 of the Policy be amended as follows: 14.12 A failure to disclose Sexual Activity with a student in accordance with s.14.6 and 14.7 of the Policy, constitutes sexual misconduct by the Teaching Staff. The failure to disclose will also be relevant to whether the student consented to any of the Sexual Activity	Policy amendment regarding disclosure of sexual activity with students by teaching staff completed; updated policy and training were delivered in 2025.	VP Students SVPR Policy Subcommittee	Completed 2025	Completed as recommended
25	The definition of incapacitated under the Policy should be amended as follows: Incapacitated: Includes a person who does not have the capacity to give consent because they are, for example, unconscious or asleep or their judgment is impaired, such as by alcohol and/or drugs, to the extent that they cannot appreciate the risks or consequences of the sexual act. In addition to obtaining affirmative consent, it is the responsibility of the person initiating or continuing sexual contact with a person who has consumed alcohol/drugs or who may be intoxicated or impaired to ascertain and confirm that the latter individual is capable of: voluntarily agreeing to the act, understanding its sexual nature and with whom they are engaging in it, understanding that they can withdraw consent at any time, and appreciating the risks and consequences of the sexual act.	Policy definition of incapacitation amended; updated policy and training were delivered in 2025.	VP Students SVPR Policy Subcommittee	Completed 2025	Completed as recommended
26	In order to reach and train faculty on key aspects of the Policy, the IRP recommends that agenda time be devoted at other scheduled faculty or University meetings for the SVPRA to deliver targeted training.	Faculty policy updates and optional employee micro-training have been delivered. Develop the ongoing faculty/staff model, including the online training resource, communications, tracking and required consultation.	Human Rights & Equity HCAL People & Culture Academic SVPRA/SVPEC	2026–27	Underway
27	An additional counsellor be hired at StFX who specializes in sexual trauma, with priority to be given to someone who identifies as racialized or Indigenous. The counsellor should be a full-time position, and available to students and staff in the summer months, in addition to the academic year.	Additional full-time sexual-trauma counsellor has not yet been secured. Continue recruitment and review specialized/culturally responsive counselling pathways, summer access, staff professional development and external-service options.	VP Students HCAL Human Rights & Equity	Ongoing; review in 2026–27	Underway
28	Build on and develop Waves of Change training, as delivered at StFX, to better incorporate diverse experiences, in particular, those of 2SLGBTQIA+, racialized and Indigenous students.	Waves of Change facilitation approaches and scenarios have been adapted to better reflect 2SLGBTQIA+, racialized and Indigenous student experiences; continue refreshing materials and facilitator practice.	VP Students HCAL SVPRA/SVPEC	Ongoing	Established ongoing practice
29	Remove the “zero tolerance” statement from the Purpose, s.1.1 and 10.55 of the Policy.	“Zero tolerance” language removed from the Sexual Violence Policy; updated policy and training completed in 2025.	VP Students SVPR Policy Subcommittee	Completed 2025	Completed as recommended
30	StFX reduce the number of broad communications issued to the community related to reported incidents of sexual violence, and develop a principled framework for such communications that furthers the objectives of the Policy	StFX has shifted toward more proactive prevention/support communications and reduced reliance on broad incident-based messages. Update the existing communications grid into a principled framework covering safety, survivor-centred practice, privacy, procedural fairness and public-domain information.	HCAL SVPRA/SVPEC Marketing & Communications VP Students VP Advancement	December 2026	Underway

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31	The REES platform be evaluated on an annual basis, to consider its benefits and disadvantages, as well as whether to invest resources in promoting it at StFX	REES has expanded to Safe Sport and Harassment & Discrimination reporting. Strengthen promotion, review the MOU and complete an interim awareness/promotion review; undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the expanded platform within three years.	HCAL Human Rights & Equity Students' Union SVPRASVPEC	2026–27 interim review; full evaluation within three years	Accepted with modification; underway
32	StFX expand and make more accessible its internal protocol for directing communications by students and their families where there is an ongoing investigation.	Clearer communication and referral pathways for students and families during ongoing investigations have been established and published; continue to apply and review as needed.	HCAL Student Life SVPRASVPEC People & Culture	Ongoing	Established ongoing practice