

Safeguards needed to address higher education cyber incidents

Today the National Student Ombudsman (NSO) released a public statement in response to concerns about the frequency and scale of higher education cyber incidents disrupting learning and exposing students to harmful material.

Since launching in February 2025, the NSO has been informed about 4 major incidents across the country. Media reports estimate more than 140,000 higher education students have been affected by cybersecurity incidents in the past 5 years.

The Ombudsman, Iain Anderson, has called on the sector to implement business continuity plans that include strategies and procedures to minimise student impact and ensure accountability, transparency, support and resources are provided to those affected by cyber incidents.

This comes after the NSO investigated a complaint about a 'Zoom-bombing' incident where an uninvited person joined a provider's unsecured online meeting and showed graphic, violent video footage to students.

'Considering the impact on students and the shift towards remote learning and online support services, I encourage higher education providers to put students at the centre of their response to cyber incidents,' said Mr Anderson.

The NSO has heard from students frustrated about a variety of issues caused by cybersecurity failures. Students have the right to make a complaint about a cyber incident — and to escalate that complaint to the NSO if the provider's response is not satisfactory.

Students can complain to the NSO by calling **1300 395 775** or visiting nso.gov.au.

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Read the full Ombudsman statement on the [NSO website](#).

For more information visit nso.gov.au or for media enquiries call 02 6243 1702 or email media@ombudsman.gov.au.