What Is Crime?

Crime is any conduct which is prohibited by law and which may result in punishment.

Crime can be generally grouped into two categories:

a) Crime against person
b) Crime against property

Personal offences include crimes such as assault, sexual assault, domestic violence, robbery and theft from the person. Property offences include theft, fraud, utage, forgery, counterfeiting, and theft of items from motor vehicle, graffiti, vandalism and property damage.

According to their seriousness these crimes can be indelible or non-indelible and are also called “summary offences”.

Indelible offences are more serious and are taken before the higher courts and may require a jury to decide the outcome. These include robbery, serious sexual assault, fraud, burglary and serious theft.

Non-indelible or summary offences are dealt with by a Magistrate's Court and are less serious with lesser penalties, e.g. shop stealing or traffic offences.

What is abuse?

On a public street if someone says to you, “Hey, go back where you belong, you are not welcome here” or, “We don’t want those clothes in Australia”, this is not something that Police can do anything about. If a person says something to you that may be considered a racist or offensive comment, or could be considered as vilification, then you may be able to make a complaint to the Anti-Discrimination Board. If this occurs on campus then you should take this up with the Academic Registrar's Division through Student Central. If you feel threatened by another person’s comments or behaviour, immediately make contact with UOW Security. The matter may then be referred to the Employment Equity and Diversity Unit (EED Unit).

What is an assault?

If someone says to you, “I am going to hit you” or they threaten to punch you and you believe that the person has the capacity to carry out that threat, then such an incident could be viewed as an assault and you should talk to the Police about what has happened.

Riding Bicycles In New South Wales

If you are riding a bicycle and from the Wollongong perspective you need to make sure that you have the right safety gear. You need to wear a helmet and a high-visibility vest and comply with the other rules of the road. You also need to make sure that the bike is in good working order.

Wollongong Police Station has an Ethnic Community Liaison Officer (ECLI) who can help with contact and interpretation. The telephone number is 4226 7899. If you need an interpreter, please ask for help. The interpreter will speak on your behalf. You may also be referred to a police officer who can help you understand court proceedings and offer advice about personal safety.

What is an assault?

An assault is any conduct which is prohibited by law and which may result in punishment. It is any act of violence or threat of violence which is intended to cause fear of harm to another person.

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Effective April 2007

University of Wollongong

NSW Police Force

Each state and territory of Australia has its own Police force that is not aligned with its political party and is completely separate from the military forces.

The New South Wales Police Force is divided into five (5) regions and then into eighty (80) Local Area Commands. The University of Wollongong geographically belongs to the Wollongong Local Area Command.

The role of the Police is to protect the public, preserve peace and safety and prevent crime.

Police also respond to a wide range of needs such as criminal and traffic offences investigation, assisting emergency services, responding to life threatening situations, assisting in mediating family and neighbourly disputes including those involving domestic violence, co-coordinating the safe and effective flow of traffic, working with the community and other departments to resolve issues of concern by providing advice on policing and crime issues.

Police are also involved in various activities to improve public safety and prevent crime. Some of the programs which involve the Police Force are: Neighborhood Watch, Crime/Stoppers and Safe House Schemes. Most police officers are recognizable by their uniform, but sometimes they perform their duties in “plain clothes”. All police officers carry a police badge and their identification while on duty.

This identification has their photograph and their name on it. If you are unsure about the identity of a person who says they are a Police officer, you can ask to see their Police Force identification.

Police powers

Police generally have the authority to arrest, detain, search, collect information, and charge a person if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a person is committing, has committed or will commit an offence.

Police have a wide range of powers to enter premises and to conduct searches on persons, homes and vehicles. Police have powers to take fingerprints, photographs or DNA samples from persons charged with certain criminal offences.

The use of these powers is controlled by strict rules which Police must obey. If you have any questions about the law and your rights and obligations, you can contact the Law Access online at www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au or call 1300 888 259. If you need an interpreter you can contact Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131450 and ask for an interpreter that speaks your language.

Reporting to the Police

If you become a victim of crime, witness a crime or believe you have information regarding a crime, there are several ways to contact Police and make a report.

1. Call 000

In an emergency situation call 000. You will be asked if you want the Police, an Ambulance or the Fire Brigade. If you need an interpreter, ask for the Police and then tell the operator what language you speak and you’ll be connected to the telephone interpreter.

2. Telephone or go to the nearest Police station

If you do not speak English, say “interpreter” and the name of the language you speak and the Police will connect you to the telephone interpreter or arrange for an appointment when an interpreter can be present.

Wollongong Police Station is open 24 hours a day. The Police Station is located at the corner of Market and Church Streets. The telephone number is 4226 7899.

Note: Refer to the street directory of Wollongong to see the location of the Police Station.

3. Call Police Assistance Line (PAL) on 131 444 (free of charge, 24 hours)

Contact the Police if you wish to report a non-emergency and a crime is no longer in progress, for example a report about a burglary, car theft, lost property, damage to property, minor traffic accidents or stealing. If you do not speak English say “interpreter” and language you speak and the Police will connect you to the telephone interpreter.

Any report made will be allocated a Police Event report number. This is an important number. Always ask for this number and write the number down so that you can follow up the matter with Police, provide the number to the University should the need arise or for insurance purposes.

4. Crime Stoppers 1800 333 000 (free of charge)

Crime Stoppers is a community-based initiative which encourages members of the community to provide information on wanted, unsolved crimes and people they know have committed crimes but have not been arrested. If you have information about criminal activity but you don’t feel safe enough to report it to the Police, you can call Crime Stoppers. People who have information may qualify for a cash reward of up to $1000 if their information leads to an arrest. Information that provides information can remain anonymous if they wish.

What Happens When Crime is Reported to the Police?

When a crime is reported to the Police a Police officer will be assigned to be in charge of the investigation. You should be given his or her name and a contact telephone number. You will need to give Police a clear and detailed statement about what happened and you will need to describe any injuries you have suffered as well as any losses.

If you have been assaulted, Police may ask or take you to see a doctor so that the injuries can be recorded and treated. Police also may take away property that belongs to you for use in evidence in any court proceedings, take photographs or check for fingerprints. They may also ask you to leave the area and not touch or clean it until their procedure is finished. They may also ask you to attend an identification parade or look at photographs to identify the alleged offender.
Role of the UOW Security

UOW Security is responsible for providing a safe and secure Campus. Security Officers take reports from staff and students about incidents and talk to students about any safety concerns they have. Security Officers provide assistance to students in a number of ways including:

- Patrolling campus and car parks on foot and on bikes.
- Monitoring safety around the campus.
- Providing safe escorts after dark.
- Responding to emergencies or incidents.
- Providing victims of crime with support.

Reporting to the UOW Security

It is important that students report incidents to UOW Security as well as the local Police for assistance. You are not uncomfortable reporting matters to the Police, UOW Security along with other University representatives can help you in making a report.

The University needs to know what issues are affecting students on campus and any thing that affects students getting to and from campus in the Illawarra. UOW Security reports any thing that could seriously impact the student whilst they are enrolled at University to the Academic Registrar. The Academic Registrar’s Divisions are responsible and provide guidance on different ways in which students can be assisted where they have had a bad experience.

You can report to the Security Office in Building 11. Or you can call security on telephone 4221 4555.

Personal Safety

Safety in public places

For safety when travelling around the Wollongong Central Business District (CBD) students need to get to know where they are going and how to get there. Get a map of the city, and when you are unsure of where you are going you will want to use the same shop and how you will travel to and from Campus and to and from the shops.

Study the public transport timetables so that you can use these, especially at night. Get to know the areas that you and other students feel comfortable moving around (Visit the University transport website and look at timetable for buses and trains http://www.uow.edu.au/about/transport/).

When you go out, think about where you are going, who you are going with and when you are going to be back. If you don’t have a bank account, you should open one as soon as possible so that you can avoid carrying large sums of cash. Use a cash card (ATMs) transactions to buy things so that you only need to carry small sums of cash $20 - $50 at a time for small inexpensive purchases. Don’t keep your PIN number with your card. Memorise it.

If you lose your card ring your bank straight away and have them cancel the card and order a replacement.

Who is a victim of crime?

A victim of crime is someone who has suffered harm because of a criminal act. The harm can be a physical injury, emotional trauma or financial loss. For example, a person who is injured in a violent attack, or a person who has experienced sexual assault or robbery is a victim of crime.

As well as the victim, there may be other people, such as witnesses, family members and friends, who are indirectly affected by the same crime.

Victims of crime have rights and responsibilities in the criminal justice system. They have the right to be treated with courtesy, compassion and with respect for their dignity and privacy. They have rights to receive information about their case, the progress of the investigation and details of any court proceedings, welfare, counselling and medical assistance. Victims play a very important role in the criminal justice system. They assist the Police in their investigations and may be called upon to participate in any court case which may follow.

How to avoid being a victim of crime

Check out the University Security’s website and go to the pdf at: http://www.uow.edu.au/about/security/security%20information%20%202010.pdf

If you do walk then consider the following:

- Your drink (alcoholic or non-alcoholic), like alcohol or some other drugs without your knowledge or consent.
- Drugs used in drink spiking usually include alcohol, sedatives, amphetaamines, GH1 (liquid ecstasy), and special K (ketamine).
- Drink spiking is a crime and it can happen anywhere - at home or at a party or in pubs and clubs.

To avoid drink spiking everyone should consider the following:

- Never accept a drink from someone you don’t know.
- Never leave your drink unattended.
- If someone offers you a drink get with that person to see what you are getting.
- Never drink something you didn’t open or if you did not see it being opened and poured.
- If unsure about your drink, leave it.
- Keep a watch on your friends so that you can all stay safe.

You are not able to see, smell or taste drugs in your drink if you have drunk it. There are a range of effects caused by drug spiking. Some of them are:

- Vomiting.
- Dizziness.
- Loss of consciousness.
- Poor coordination and balance.
- Slurred speech.
- Muscle spasms.
- Respiratory (breathing) difficulties.
- Change in behaviour (lossing control or acting in a more sexual and flirtatious way).
- Feeling intoxicated and have a little alcohol.
- Feeling disoriented, having memory blanks.

If you think your drink has been spiked tell someone (a friend, bar staff or security) and go to the nearest person (security or a staff member or a security officer). If you are unsure about your drink leave it. You can report your property loss or theft.

In the event that you have an accident or incident and require assistance or you get to a safe place.

- Do not place yourself or others in danger.
- Do not drive faster that the speed limit signs allow and wear a NSW photographic security licence and a University Security Officers – UOW Security. The Security Officers are strategically located across campus.

Role of the UOW Security

Responsible consumption of alcohol

Excessive consumption of alcohol can put you in a situation where you are unable to look after yourself. Your normal capacity to make sensible decisions about your own welfare is diminished and your ability to conduct yourself within the normal acceptable standards of the community can be affected.

Responsible consumption of alcohol

It is your responsibility to monitor how much you are drinking and how it is affecting you.

Drink spiking

Drink spiking happens when someone adds something else to your drink without your knowledge or consent.

Drugs

As a general rule, it is illegal to use any drug:

- That cannot be purchased or bought from a shop or chemist.
- That is prescribed for you by a doctor.

Some drugs can be used legally when they have been prescribed by a doctor for that person. This can only be supplied by chemists (pharmacists). It is illegal to be in possession of any of these restricted drugs if they have not been prescribed for you by a doctor.

In NSW it is a crime to use or have certain drugs in any circumstances. The most common illegal drugs include cannabis (marijuana), heroin, amphetamines (speed, LSD), cocaine (including crack) and ‘designer drugs’ (ice, ecstasy). The possession, use, sale, distribution, importation, manufacturing or trafficking of a wide range of drugs is illegal. If you see someone that you suspect has overdosed on a drug, call 000 immediately and ask for an ambulance.

Alcohol and behaviour

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- It is your responsibility to monitor how much you are drinking and how it is affecting you.

- Drink spiking

Protecting Property

You should keep an inventory or information about your property. This will help to identify what you own in the event that you suffer a loss or theft. This would be very important if you had an insurance policy, so you can make a claim or you needed to report your property loss or theft.

Records

You should record the Brand name, the model and model number and the serial number of the product. Also record the date of purchase, and from where or whom. Keep any receipts and/or records of purchase, and from whom. You may want to make a claim or you wished to make a claim or you needed to report your property loss or theft.

Marking and Engaging

You should mark your property or engrave it to make your property less desirable to thieves. If your property is taken, this will also make it easier for the Police to identify and recover your property. You should mark property with a personal coding containing your initials, driver’s licence number or a D.O.B (date of birth) and the state where you are living in. For example John Smith with a driver’s licence number would be

JS 291442 NSW

John Dr Smith with a D.O.B 25/03/81 living in NSW with no driver’s licence number would be

JS 250381 NSW

You should write down your personal code with your inventory and provide this to the Police so that they should need ever arise to report a loss.

Volunteers in Policing

Volunteers who perform voluntary work with the NSW Police are available to come to your home by making an appointment. The volunteers can engrave your property and provide you with some good advice about Home Security. The volunteers will bring their own equipment; you do not need to have your own. They can be contacted through Wollongong Police Station. This is a free service to the community.

Insurance

It makes sense to consider taking an insurance policy for where you are living. Contents insurance to cover property and clothing, and for vehicle insurance to cover for accidents that happen to you or to someone else.

Covering the loss of property against fire and theft can protect you financially from unforeseen events where you live. Adding insurance coverage against loss or theft of personal effects like the home may help if events occur that could seriously disrupt your lifestyle and your studies at University.

Losing a Laptop computer could have an effect on your studies and affect you handling in assignments on time. It’s a good idea to think about having a backup for your work and your assignments in case you lose your laptop or PC stolen, or in case the PC has a hard drive failure. Always back up your work by running a off CD copy, back up to a USB or an external hard drive. How often backups should be will be determined by how often you need to save new material.

First of all it could be misleading. Remember that you will not need to live in the house for years but also study here as well. Ask for yourself whether the place is going to be easy to travel to and from, is it safe, will my valuables be secure, will I be able to study without interruptions, are there adequate services like telephone or broadband internet, etc.

Safety and privacy tips

- In shared accommodation do not leave valuable items unsecured or unsupervised
- Ensure the landlord provides your lock with a lock
- Ensure the bathroom has privacy locks fitted

Because these Officers visit other University properties in the Wollongong area they also monitor student movements in the local street network.

After dark, Security Officers provide Safety escorts on campus and in the vicinity of the North Wollongong Railway Station where the Unil Shuttle is not running and as far as Gathering Place – University. See Contact for numbers.

On campus Security Telephones are strategically located across campus. These telephones are provided by Security Officers for safe escorts or for assistance in emergencies, access to the campus public services through 000 including the Police, Fire Brigade and Ambulance and access to Wollongong Taxis, the NRMA Road Service and the Police Assistance Line 131.444.

To find more information about UOW Security go to: http://www.uow.edu.au/about/security/