

RESPECT AND EQUALITY

**Respect and Equality: Working with TAFE
to prevent violence against women**

NATIONAL GUIDE

**Our
WATCH**
End violence against
Women And Their Children

Acknowledgements

Five TAFEs in Victoria participated in the Respect and Equality in TAFE pilot:

- Chisholm Institute
- Swinburne University of Technology
- Melbourne Polytechnic
- Bendigo Kangan Institute
- SuniTAFE.

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Suggested citation: Our Watch. (2023). *Respect and Equality: Working with TAFE to prevent violence against women (National guide)*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

Our Watch acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government in the development of the Respect and Equality in TAFE framework.

Our Watch acknowledges the support of the Department of Social Services.



Australian Government

Acknowledgement of Country

Our Watch acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land across Australia on which we work and live. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past and present.

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This guide includes an overview of:

-  the role of TAFE in preventing violence against women

-  a whole-of-institution approach to preventing violence against women

-  where to start your prevention work

-  where to focus your work

-  how to implement a whole-of-institution approach

-  tools and resources to support implementation.

Introduction

TAFE is key to Australia’s social and economic success. As such, TAFE has a vital role to play in creating a society which is respectful, equitable and free from violence.

This guide outlines the Respect and Equality approach, which supports VET institutions to build environments where staff and students feel safe, respected and valued.

Research and evidence tell us that violence against women can be reduced by increasing gender equality in everyday life.¹ By engaging with the Respect and Equality approach, your institution can help prevent violence against women by actively promoting and modelling gender equality.

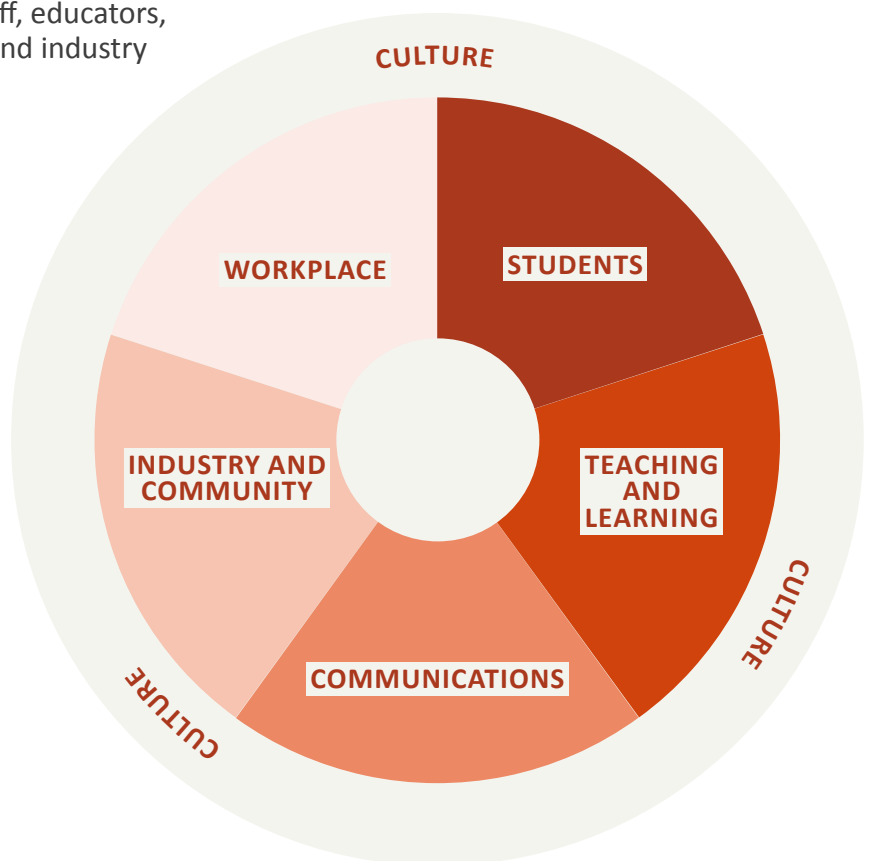
This guide recognises that everyone at TAFE has a role to play in promoting gender equality, from boards, CEOs and senior executives, to managers, Human Resources staff, educators, Student Services and students, and industry and community partners.

It has been designed to support the staff or departments who are assigned to lead respect and equality work.

The Respect and Equality approach has been divided into five key domains: **workplace, students, teaching and learning, communications, and industry and community.** Taking action in each of the domains can support institutions to build a **culture** of respect and equality across the entire institution.

BELOW: The five key domains of the Respect and Equality approach.

A note on language
This document will for the most part use the terms ‘technical and further education (TAFE)’ and ‘vocational education and training (VET)’ interchangeably to refer to VET, TAFE, and dual-sector institutions.



PART 1

**Understanding violence
against women**

What we currently know about violence against women

Violence is preventable

Violence against women in Australia is a national epidemic. One in three women have experienced physical violence² and on average, one woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner.³ However, it is not an inevitable or intractable social problem. Rather, it is the product of complex yet modifiable social and environmental factors. Put simply, violence against women is preventable.

Preventing violence against women involves more than just changing people's minds. It's about changing the society and culture in which individuals develop attitudes and behaviours related to gender, power and violence.

International and Australian research clearly demonstrates that violence against women is driven by gender inequality.⁴ The four expressions of gender inequality (see [page 10](#)), called 'gendered drivers', increase the likelihood of violence against women occurring. To stop violence against women, we need to take action on each of these drivers.

By challenging all four gendered drivers, we can improve gender equality in all elements of everyday life and prevent violence against women.

In times of crisis, women are often disproportionately affected, including an increased burden of unpaid work and reductions to their economic security. Crises can have long-lasting impacts on gender equality and can threaten to reverse the gains that have been made to address this issue in Australia. Gender equality is crucial to the strength of economic and social recovery from COVID-19.⁵

In Australia, on average one woman is killed by her partner or ex-partner every week.

Language and conceptual framing

Our Watch, *Change the story* and this framework deliberately adopt the language and scope of ‘violence against women’ or ‘gendered violence’. These terms are more appropriate for a national prevention framework than others, such as ‘domestic, family and sexual violence’, for the following reasons:

- ‘Violence against women’ is the term used in the international human rights context, derived from the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, reflected in United Nations guidance, and used in international research and practice. Australia’s approach should align with this international usage.
- While domestic, family and sexual violence are the most common forms of violence against women, there are other forms of violence that women experience that are not captured by this language, including, for example, sexual harassment, violence against women in residential care, misogynistic and violent online abuse, reproductive and other forms of coercion (for example, withholding medication or disability aids), and trafficking of women. The broader term ‘violence against women’ is better able to encompass the whole range of different forms of violence against women that occur across diverse contexts but that share gendered drivers.
- Women make up the overwhelming majority of victims of domestic and family violence and sexual violence, making the term ‘violence against women’ more appropriate and accurate, and more effective in communicating the gendered nature of this violence.
- The term ‘domestic, family and sexual violence’ suggests three separate or different forms of violence, yet domestic and family violence often includes sexual violence.
- Even in relation to partner violence, the terms ‘domestic’ or ‘family’ violence are too narrow to capture violence perpetrated by men who are not in a ‘domestic’ or familial relationship with their victim (for example,

dating violence). The term ‘violence against women’ provides a scope that better encompasses all forms of intimate partner/ex-partner violence. Framing a national approach to prevention of all forms of ‘violence against women’ and maintaining consistency in the use of this language will help address all these issues. This framing requires a focus on the gendered nature of the issue. It brings multiple forms of gendered violence into view and helps build understanding of the connections between them. From a prevention perspective, it demonstrates the value of addressing the shared gendered drivers that underpin the many different but related forms of men’s violence against women.⁶

What we mean when we say ‘women’

Change the story recognises that the category of ‘women’ is a socially constructed one, and part of a binary system of sex and gender categories that does not represent the gender diversity of the population. The inherent limitations of binary language are acknowledged on the following page.

The framework’s definition of a woman includes anyone who identifies and lives as a woman, which includes cisgender and trans women. It recognises that the violence experienced by cisgender heterosexual women can be different from violence experienced by lesbian women, bisexual women or trans women, who may also be targeted on the basis of their sexuality and/or their perceived gender non-conformity.

Women are not a fixed or homogenous group. Women comprise 50.2 per cent of the Australian population who all have experiences as women, but who also hold multiple identities and have different experiences based on their age, religion, class, ethnicity, experience of disability, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous status, education, geographic location, sexuality or gender identity, health status, migration experience or family background.⁷

The use and limitations of binary language

The current framing of much prevention work tends to use binary language; that is, language that assumes only two categories of sex and gender and is limited by binary terms such as men/women, male/female, masculinity/femininity. The field is also largely focused on the experiences of those who are cisgender and heterosexual. Binary language is commonly used and understood in Australia because the evidence shows that cisgender heterosexual women make up the largest cohort of victims of gendered violence (and current data collection mechanisms are likely to prioritise these experiences), and that this violence is overwhelmingly perpetrated by cisgender heterosexual men.

While neither sex nor gender exist in binary categories, these categories still have very real effects. For this reason, binary language is useful to frame discussions about gendered violence, because it conveys the overwhelmingly gendered nature and dynamics of perpetration and victimisation. At the same time, however, there are people whose experiences and identities are not captured by the use of binary language and this should be acknowledged.

This framework's focus is on the prevention of violence against women (including both cisgender and trans women). While this scope necessitates the use of binary language, the framework also seeks to challenge these conventions. It does this by pointing to the need for a gender transformative approach to prevention.

Prevention efforts ultimately seek to be gender transformative, and this means wherever possible using inclusive, expansive language that does not reinforce gender binaries. However, it is also important that prevention efforts both acknowledge the very real effects of binary categories in the current social context, and respond to current community understandings of gender, if

they are to effectively take people on this transformative journey. This means that there will be circumstances in which it is necessary to use binary gendered language to convey an intended meaning. In doing so, it remains important to recognise the limitations of such language and acknowledge the need for additional work to reflect the experiences of those whose experiences and identities do not fall within a binary framing.⁸

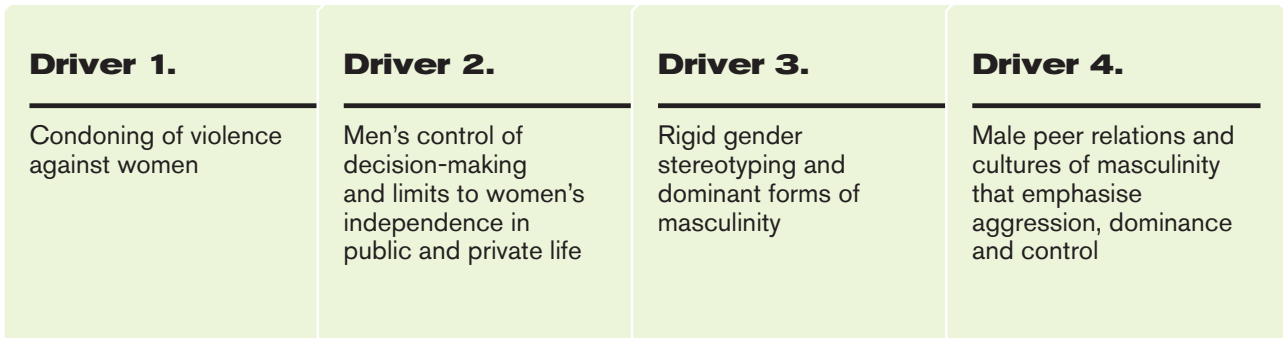
See Our Watch's key framework, [*Change the story*](#), for more on primary prevention of violence against women in Australia.



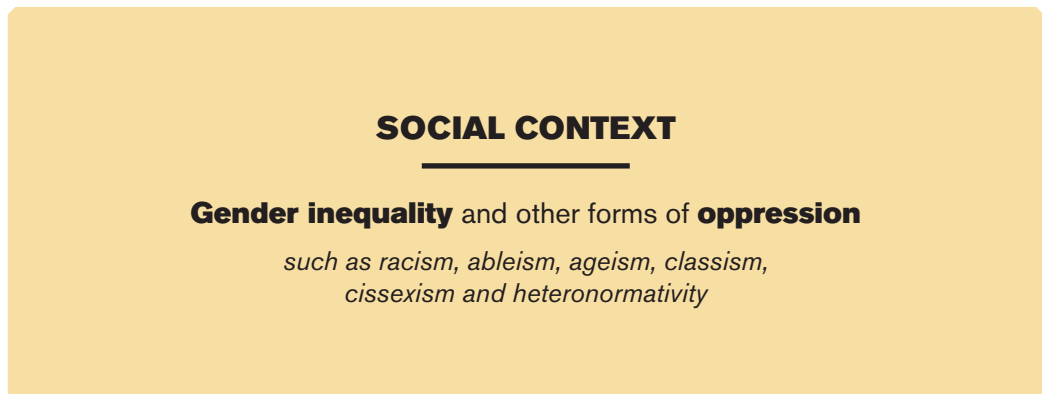
THE PROBLEM

Violence against women is serious, prevalent and driven by gender inequality

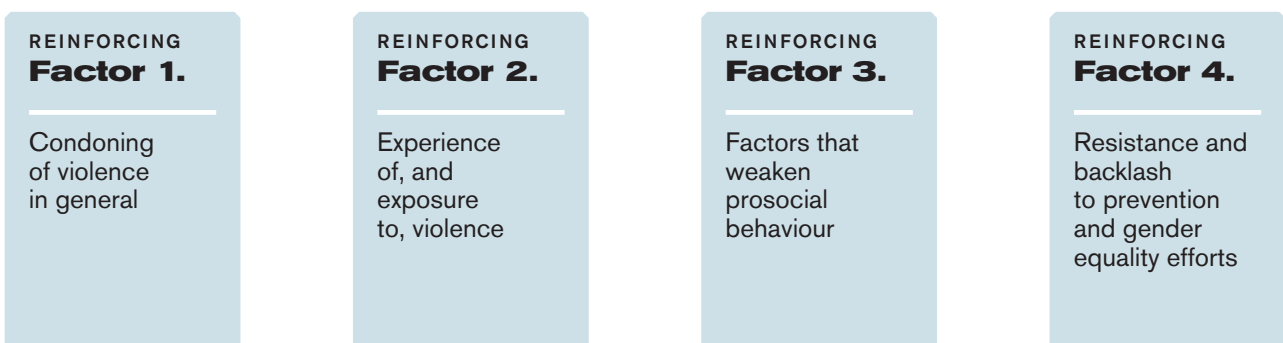
Gendered drivers of violence against women



Underlying **social context** for violence against women



Factors that reinforce violence against women



These drivers and reinforcing factors play out at every level of society: from individual attitudes and behaviours, to social norms, organisational cultures and practices, policies, laws, and institutions.

Source: Our Watch. (2021). *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia* (2nd ed.). Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch. pp. 70–71.

THE SOLUTION

Violence against women is preventable if we all work together

Essential actions to address the gendered drivers

ACTION 1. **ESSENTIAL**

Challenge the condoning of violence against women

ACTION 2. **ESSENTIAL**

Promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships

ACTION 3. **ESSENTIAL**

Build new social norms that foster personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes

ACTION 4. **ESSENTIAL**

Support men and boys in developing healthy masculinities and positive, supportive male peer relationships

Essential actions to address the underlying social context

ACTION 5. **ESSENTIAL**

Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life

ACTION 6. **ESSENTIAL**

Address the intersections between gender inequality and other forms of systemic and structural oppression and discrimination, and promote broader social justice

ACTION 7. **ESSENTIAL**

Build safe, fair and equitable organisations and institutions by focusing on policy and systems change

ACTION 8. **ESSENTIAL**

Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys, in public and private spheres

Supporting actions to address the reinforcing factors

ACTION 9. **SUPPORTING**

Challenge the normalisation of violence and aggression as an expression of masculinity

ACTION 10. **SUPPORTING**

Reduce the long-term impacts of exposure to violence, and prevent further exposure

ACTION 11. **SUPPORTING**

Strengthen prosocial behaviour

ACTION 12. **SUPPORTING**

Plan for and actively address backlash and resistance

These 12 actions need to be implemented at every level of society: using legislative, institutional, policy and program responses; by governments, organisations and individuals; in settings where people live, work, learn and socialise; in ways that are tailored to the context and needs of different groups.

GENDER INEQUALITY IN AUSTRALIA

WHERE WE ARE NOW

Despite progress in recent years, education institutions and workplaces can still be sites of inequality.

85% of Australian women over the age of 15 have been sexually harassed at some point in their lives.⁹

The average weekly wage for a woman is **17.2%** less than for a man.¹⁰

Women represent only **2%** of qualified trade workers, but comprise almost half of all employed persons in the labour force in Australia.¹¹

Gender stereotypes as well as industrial and economic barriers inhibit the entry of women into male-dominated VET courses and jobs.¹²

Male-dominated trades are generally higher paid than the female-dominated trades and can offer opportunities for enhanced economic security for women.¹³

**A VISION FOR
RESPECT AND
EQUALITY
IN TAFE**

WHERE WE
WANT TO BE

Across our society, if we all work together, as educators, as employers and as a community, we can change this picture of gender inequality in Australia and stop violence against women before it starts. In achieving the vision of an Australia free from violence, every TAFE has a role to play.

Vision

TAFEs are leaders in preventing violence against women, and provide safe, welcoming and respectful environments for all.

Objective

TAFEs prevent gender-based violence by promoting gender equality through ensuring equality of opportunity in vocational education and employment.

Long-term goals

- There is greater understanding of what works to support changes in TAFE to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women.
- Changed policies, practices and structures in TAFEs that support gender equality and prevent violence against women.
- Increased and ongoing/sustained financial resources to continue work to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women in TAFEs.
- Increased system-actor capacity (accountability, functions, workforce) to enable work to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women in TAFEs.

Multiple forms of inequality contribute to violence against women

This guide aims to address the drivers of all violence against women in TAFE, VET, and dual-sector institutions, including family violence, sexual harassment, bullying, online violence, coercion, abuse and gaslighting. It also recognises that violence is experienced by people whose identity does not conform to binary definitions of sex and gender and therefore covers violence experienced by the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.

Women are not a homogenous group, but one comprising many and varied personal identities and social positions.

The intersectional approach embedded in this framework is one that recognises that violence and gender inequality exist in relation to multiple and intersecting systems of sexism; racism; colonialism; classism; heteronormativity; cisnormativity; homo-, bi- and transphobia; ablesim and ageism; and their corresponding systems of power and privilege. These intersections create systems of structured inequality, characterised by the unequal distribution of power, wealth, income and social status.¹⁴

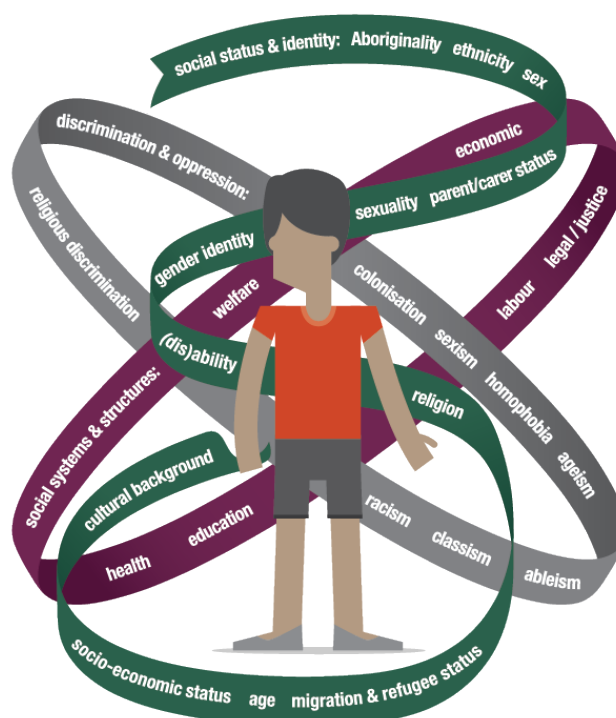
Power, privilege and oppression are reinforced by social systems and structures such as health, education, welfare and legal systems.

Gender inequality is a necessary condition for violence against women to occur and to be so prevalent. But it is not the only, or the most prominent, factor to influence violence in every context.

RIGHT: Systems and structures of oppression and discrimination can affect people differently.

RESOURCES

- [Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities](#) (Our Watch resource)
- [Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children](#) (Our Watch resource)
- [Men in focus practice guide: Addressing masculinities and working with men in the prevention of men's violence against women](#). (Our Watch resource)
- [Putting the prevention of violence against women into practice: How to Change the story](#) (Our Watch resource)
- [Pride in prevention: A guide to primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities](#) (Rainbow Health Resource)



What does this mean for the prevention of violence against women?

The gendered drivers of violence against women are often experienced in combination with other forms of structural inequality and discrimination. This helps explain why there are different rates and types of violence experienced by different groups of women. Women who face multiple forms of discrimination and oppression may experience violence more frequently, or of greater severity.

Through the implementation of the Respect and Equality approach there are opportunities to consider and address:

- other forms of inequality and discrimination that can intersect with gender inequality to exacerbate violence. See the [Respect and Equality: Intersectionality in practice guide](#) for more;
- the need to partner with community organisations to ensure you have the specialist knowledge and advice you need to do prevention work effectively;
- the attitudes, behaviours and systems that drive other forms of inequality so that we can create gender equality for all; and
- how to deal with resistance and backlash.

Engaging men and boys in this work

The drivers of violence impact everyone, no matter your gender. Men are negatively impacted by the gendered drivers of violence, with research and evidence demonstrating dominant patterns of masculinity have been found to produce:

- negative health and wellbeing outcomes for men, including suicide and depression;
- poor mechanisms for coping and for seeking help; and
- more frequent involvement in incidents of violence and bullying.¹⁵

It is important to note that not all men experience power and privilege in the same way. Men too experience intersecting forms of oppression such as ableism, colonialism, racism and homophobia. The way you engage with men and boys should take this into consideration. We also know that men who are negatively impacted by other systems and structures of discrimination and disadvantage suffer disproportionate negative impacts to their health and wellbeing compared to other men.¹⁶

The Respect and Equality approach demonstrates opportunities for male staff and students to increase their awareness and knowledge about how they can actively promote gender equality and prevent violence against women. There are things all men can do to end the culture of violence against women.

Through the delivery of apprenticeships, VET institutions are ideally placed to address some of the drivers of violence against women at an educational and industry level (TAFEs deliver around 70% of all apprenticeships). Many trades, STEM and IT industries are male-dominated or do not traditionally feature women in leadership positions. Many nursing, aged care and child care industries are female-dominated. Such historical gender divisions in industries will need to break down if future industry needs are to be met.¹⁷

VET institutions have a chance to build cultures where gender stereotypes are challenged, sexism and discrimination is not tolerated, and gender equality is promoted and modelled. In this way, our workplaces and educational settings become safer, we have more skilled workers for the community and employers, skill shortages can be addressed, and economies will be supported by businesses that reflect the community that they service.

Gender equality benefits TAFE and the community

Gender equality delivers positive outcomes for students, teachers, the TAFE community and business. We know that we have better outcomes for employees, potential and future workers, local industry and the broader economy when we have a safe community.¹⁸ There are strong business and social reasons to prevent violence against women and promote gender equality.¹⁹

This guide outlines planned and coordinated actions that require TAFEs to make a commitment of time, skills and resources. The return on this investment includes many benefits:

Individual and relationship

- Staff and students' performance is enhanced by working and learning in environments where they feel safe, respected and valued.
- Staff and students experience improved health, wellbeing and economic results if they are safe in their relationships.

Organisational and community

- Being an employer and learning institution of choice influences the recruitment and retention of staff and students. 'Workplace policies that support gender equality are a crucial tool for attracting and retaining talented employees. High-performing

employees are attracted to companies that have a positive reputation for promoting gender equality.'²⁰

- Requirements under federal and/or state laws to promote workplace gender equality and alignments are adhered to.

System and institutional

- Meeting the growing demand across industries for workers who have a strong understanding of gender equitable work practices meets legal and ethical obligations.
- It also helps to transform the highly gender-segregated workforce, thereby attracting more women into masculinised industries and occupations, and more men into feminised industries and occupations.

Societal

- Women and men experience equal employment opportunities across the wide range of professions and industries that TAFEs feed into, which contributes to closing the gender pay gap.
- Women and girls being safe and having their human rights respected in TAFE contributes to an Australia free of violence against women where women are respected, valued and treated as equals.

Economics

- It will address the cost to the economy of violence against women, which in 2014–15 is calculated to be \$21.7 billion – this includes the cost of pain, suffering and premature mortality.
- Reducing violence against women is anticipated to result in a benefit of \$18 million to \$36 million over 10 years, and over a lifetime a potential gain of \$35.6 to \$71.1 million to the economy.²¹
- Reducing violence against women through the promotion of gender equality is associated with improved national productivity and growth and future-proofing the economy.²²

Employers

- Gender equitable organisations save money and increase profits. Gender and cultural diversity are correlated with profitability.²³
- There is a positive impact on occupational health and safety as diversifying the workplace and addressing poor behaviours that are encouraged by gender stereotypes can lead to safer workplaces.²⁴
- For employers, reducing violence against women through gender equality will increase organisational performance, enhance the company's capacity to attract talent and retain employees, and enhance the reputation of their business.²⁵

Taking a planned approach to preventing violence against women by promoting gender equality will assist VET institutions to:

- add value to the experience and learning of students
- support and provide a better employment environment for staff
- provide evidence for TAFE to meet regulatory obligations
- position Australian TAFEs to be leaders in meeting changing market demand and providing positive learning environments
- enable boards and executive teams to effectively plan for better use of resources to better meet the needs of employers, students and the community.

Meeting Legislative Expectations

Preventing gender-based violence by promoting gender equality not only benefits the TAFE community, but meets important international, federal, and jurisdictional legislative instruments such as:

International

- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- United Nations [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women](#) (CEDAW)
- United Nations [Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women](#) (DEVAW)

Federal

- [National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032](#)
- [Respect@Work Act 2022](#)
- [Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012](#)
- [Workplace Gender Equality \(Minimum Standards\) Instrument 2014](#)

Jurisdictional

- Australian Capital Territory [Family Violence Act 2016](#)
- Northern Territory [Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007](#)
- South Australia [Intervention Orders \(Prevention of Abuse\) Act 2009](#)
- Tasmania [Family Violence Act 2004](#).

Getting started

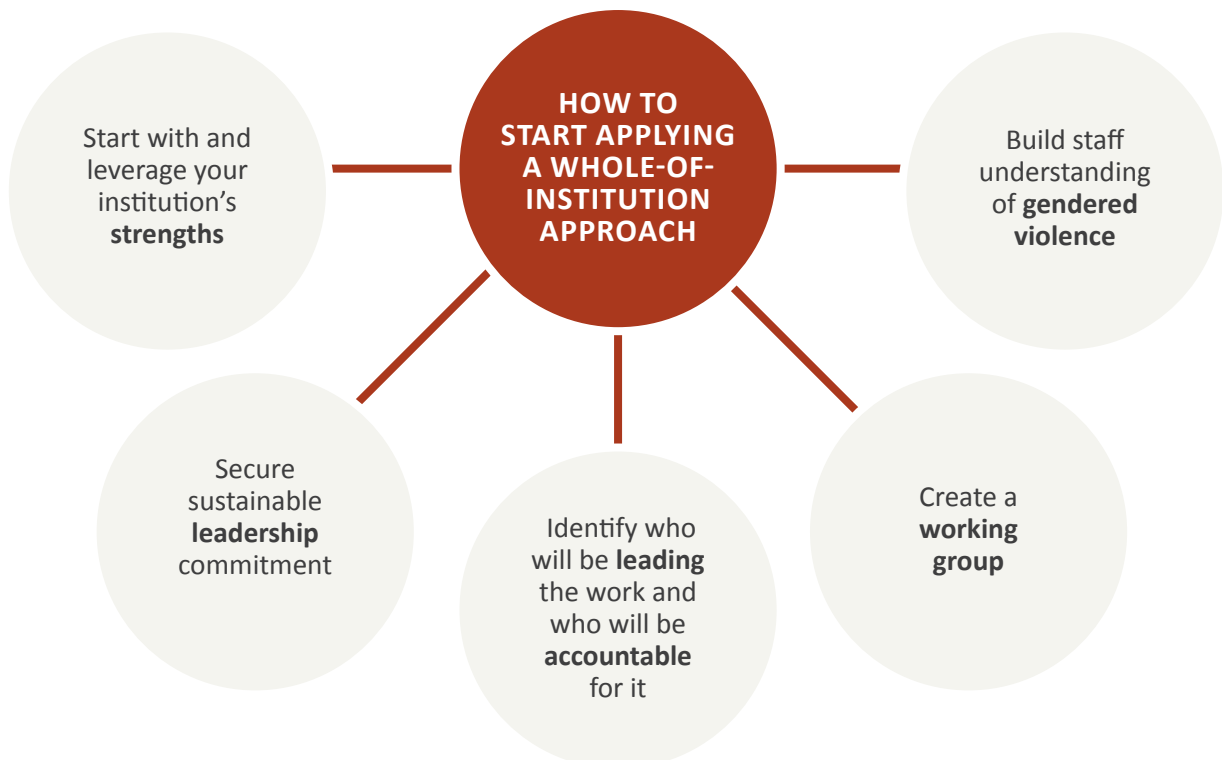
While no two organisations' journey regarding gender equality will look identical, there are some things each and every organisation should consider prior to jumping into action, to ensure you set your organisation up for the best outcomes possible.

The characteristics listed below provide the foundations any TAFE engaging in organisational change to promote gender equality should have in place. Securing these foundational pieces is key to setting your TAFE up for success, as it can streamline actions and minimise resistance, and prioritise safety.

The essential foundations to work on before you start implementing the Respect and Equality approach include:

- securing commitment from leadership
- creating a working group
- Identify who will be leading the work and who will be accountable for it
- understanding a whole-of-institution approach across the five domains
- establishing policies and practices to prioritise the safety of staff and students
- increasing key staff's understanding of violence against women.

BELOW: Getting started with applying a whole-of-institution approach.



Securing leadership commitment

The success of the Respect and Equality approach relies on formal support from TAFE leadership, including the CEO, board, senior executives and other members of the executive team. A commitment from the CEO and leadership provides legitimacy to the work, encouraging buy-in from staff and students, which can enhance participation in activities and minimise resistance. For leaders to support the use of time, energy and resources to achieve equality and respect in their institute, they need time to reflect on their own perspectives and possible biases, explore new ways of thinking, and consider how things like gender targets or new policies could impact the business or organisation. Therefore, it is worth investing time to secure genuine senior leadership commitment. This commitment should be embedded throughout the program to achieve sustainable change for the prevention of gendered violence.

RESOURCES

- [Respect and Equality: Case studies of violence prevention in tertiary education](#) (Our Watch resource)
- [Engaging leaders and securing commitment](#) (Our Watch Workplace Equality and Respect webpage)
- [How it might look in my workplace](#) (Our Watch Workplace Equality and Respect webpage)

Creating a working group

Creating a working group is a key step in establishing the Respect and Equality approach in your institution. This might look different across the vocational education sector, with variables including whether you are a dual sector VET/Higher Education provider or a standalone VET provider.

Building a diverse working group team, with representation from across the organisation will support you for success. Things to consider include:

- your preferred process of calling for interest to participate in the working group
- member roles
- availability for meetings and tasks
- establishing terms of reference
- understanding your starting point, what's currently working and what isn't
- a communications strategy within the group and within the business
- how to keep your leadership team informed.

If you already have a gender equality working group or remit, consider how to integrate your objectives.

Working group capacity can vary based on your workforce and resources. Ideally the working group should comprise a minimum of five members of staff across the five domains.

The working group should meet semi-regularly (quarterly, monthly, biweekly, or weekly to be determined by the group) to discuss the strategy and implementation of the Respect and Equality framework. You can read more about creating a working group under steps for implementation, Step 1, [page 37](#).

Appoint a gender equality lead

Identifying and appointing an individual to take the lead on project managing Respect and Equality, with support and resourcing from leadership as the project sponsor to coordinate the work, is critical. This individual is referred to as the 'gender equality lead' in this guide. The gender equality lead provides oversight of the implementation of the approach, coordinates actions across the TAFE, holds the vision for gender equality, and communicates how to get there.

But one person or department cannot do it alone. The gender equality lead will need to work closely with staff across the five domains. The gender equality lead will oversee and support each domain to undertake various activities and will lead some components of the work. Guidance and support from the gender equality lead combined with authorisation from the executive enables allocation of work across domains to create ownership, responsibility, accountability and impact.

It is imperative that the team and individuals who lead the work have sufficient time and resources to enable them to carry out the activities. Without this, the initiatives may not reach as many staff as desired, or may not be as impactful.

RESOURCES

- Respect and Equality domains - refer to [page 24](#)

Other whole-of-institution models in learning environments:

- [A whole-of-school approach](#) (Our Watch respectful relationships education webpage)
- [Respectful Relationships](#) (Victorian Government webpage)
- [Change the story at your university](#) (Our Watch *Educating for Equality* webpage)

Applying a whole-of-institution approach

Respect and Equality takes a whole-of-institution approach to preventing violence against women, because evidence tells us that we need to work across all areas of an institution to make lasting change. Complex issues such as violence against women cannot be addressed with one activity. All efforts undertaken by TAFEs need to sit within a broader, institution-wide strategy that addresses the drivers of violence against women. This whole-of-institution approach is not intended to replace or duplicate existing work. Rather, it aims to:

- draw together the entire TAFE community in a joint commitment to the prevention of violence against women
- support a primary prevention approach in TAFE that is holistic and underpinned by a long-term strategy and sector coordination
- highlight the role everyone within a TAFE has in creating a culture where gender stereotypes are challenged, gender-based discrimination is unacceptable, and gender equality is actively promoted and modelled
- provide practical tools and resources to support TAFEs.

Prior to implementation, it is helpful for the project sponsor, gender equality lead, and working group to have a good understanding of each of the five domains, and what challenging gender inequality looks like in each of the domains.

Ensuring the safety of staff and students

For primary prevention activities to be delivered safely, appropriate response policies, procedures and services must be in place. Evidence shows that when we openly discuss and show that a workplace supports the prevention of violence against women, staff and students may feel safe to disclose their own experiences of violence. Therefore, response systems and referral pathways to family violence and sexual assault services must be established before action to prevent

violence is undertaken.²⁶ Some students will be under 18 years of age and VET, TAFE and dual-sector institutes are required to comply with the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) and the relevant child safety standards in their state or territory.

Under [The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022](#) Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety (ANROWS) produced the [National Risk Assessment Principles for Domestic and Family Violence](#) to be used in conjunction with your state and territory frameworks. Using best practice guidance, risk assessment tools and resources to assess family violence risk and share that information safely across agencies is everybody’s responsibility. Professionals across a broad range of services, organisations, professions and sectors have a shared responsibility for identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk, even where it may not be core business.

It is essential that TAFEs are respectful and safe environments for people who may be enduring or escaping violence. Not all staff are expected to become experts at responding to violence – but everyone has a role to play.

Key staff and educators should be trained in responding to disclosures.²⁷ These staff members need to be aware of how and where to refer students or colleagues who disclose being a victim or a perpetrator of violence. It is important that individuals are connected to the service system through referral to Student Services and/or local family violence and sexual assault services. If there has been a disclosure of someone using violence, they can be linked to the perpetrator intervention services.

Additionally, TAFEs need protocols in place to ensure that no student or employee faces a penalty for circumstances related to experiencing violence (for example, missing a deadline, absence from work, or needing to disclose that another staff member or student perpetrated violence towards them). Processes and systems, such as complaints processes, mechanisms for handling misconduct, and Human Resources units, have a significant role in ensuring the safety of students and

staff. Processes must be confidential, safe and timely. It is recommended that student-facing staff, Human Resources staff and counsellors consider completing a course on identifying and responding to violence. This course will look different across the different TAFE providers, so it will be essential to find the course that best meets the needs of your institution.

RESOURCES

For staff training:

- [ACT Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework](#) (Australian Capital Territory Government resource)
- [Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework](#) (RAMF) (Northern Territory Government resource)
- [Family Safety Framework Practice Manual](#) (South Australian Government resource)
- [Prevention and Response Training](#) (Safe and Equal online training resources)
- [Course in Identifying and Responding to Family Violence Risk 22510VIC](#) (Nationally recognised training course)
- [Effectively preventing and responding to sexual harassment: A quick guide](#) (Australian Human Rights Commission resource)
- [Practice guidance: Responding to disclosures](#) (Our Watch resource)

RESOURCES

Organisational focused resources:

- [Responsibility 1: respectful, sensitive and safe engagement](#) (Victorian Government resource)
- [Practice guidance: Workplace support for staff who experience family violence](#) (Our Watch resource)
- [Practice guidance: Workplace responses to staff who perpetrate violence](#) (Our Watch resource)
- [Practice guidance: Working in regional, rural and remote workplaces to prevent violence against women](#) (Our Watch resource)

Increasing staff understanding of the prevention of violence against women

As discussed on [page 7](#), violence against women is driven by gender inequality. While not every person in the organisation needs to have a thorough understanding of the drivers of violence against women and the reinforcing factors (outlined on [page 11](#)) it is important that key staff have this knowledge. This will allow those key staff to impart this information to fellow colleagues, build a shared understanding, lead actions that will challenge gender inequality, ensure actions are evidence-based and do no harm, and build your capacity internally, thus enhancing sustainability.

Professional development may be required for staff to deepen their knowledge of the prevention of violence against women. Organisations that specialise in the prevention of violence against women regularly host training sessions that would be beneficial for key staff to attend. Or these organisations may be able to deliver an internal training session for the Respect and Equality Working group at a cost.

Our Watch has also developed a number of free, accessible evidenced-based resources that can support the gender equality leads to build their understanding of the issue, and gain an insight into how organisations can effectively challenge gender equality in their environment. Workshop materials can be found on the [Respect and Equality website](#).

TRAINING

Non-accredited training:

- [Gender Equity Microcredentials](#) (Women's Health Victoria online course)
- [Introduction to Preventing Violence Against Women](#) (GenVic eLearning module)
- [Mentors in Violence Prevention Program](#) (Women's Health Tasmania workshops)
- [Pathway course](#) (Women's Health Victoria online course)
- [Prevention and Response Training](#) (Safe and Equal online professional development and training)
- [Preventing Gender Based Violence: Your Role in the Community](#) (YWCA Canberra course)
- [Recognise and Respond to Domestic and Family Violence Training](#) (Women's Safety Services South Australia courses)

RESOURCES

- [*Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia \(2nd ed\)*](#)
(Our Watch resource)
- [*Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities*](#)
(Our Watch resource)
- [*Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children*](#)
(Our Watch resource)
- [Quick facts](#) (Our Watch webpage)
- [Prevention Handbook](#)
(Our Watch website)

A whole-of-institution approach to prevent violence against women

Effective efforts to prevent violence against women engage people across the many different places where they live, work, learn and socialise. VET institutions play various roles as employers, educators, community members and industry partners, all of which make them a key player in influencing attitudes, behaviours and systems that help to address the drivers of violence. TAFEs are leaders in the local community and can also set the standard for positive behaviours and equality across the local economy.

The prevention of violence against women focuses on stopping violence from occurring in the first place by addressing the underlying drivers of violence. This means working with all people, across all levels of the TAFE, to transform the social context in which violence against women occurs. It also means ensuring the systems, processes and culture are in place to respond appropriately to any staff or students who experience violence, at home, at TAFE or in the community.

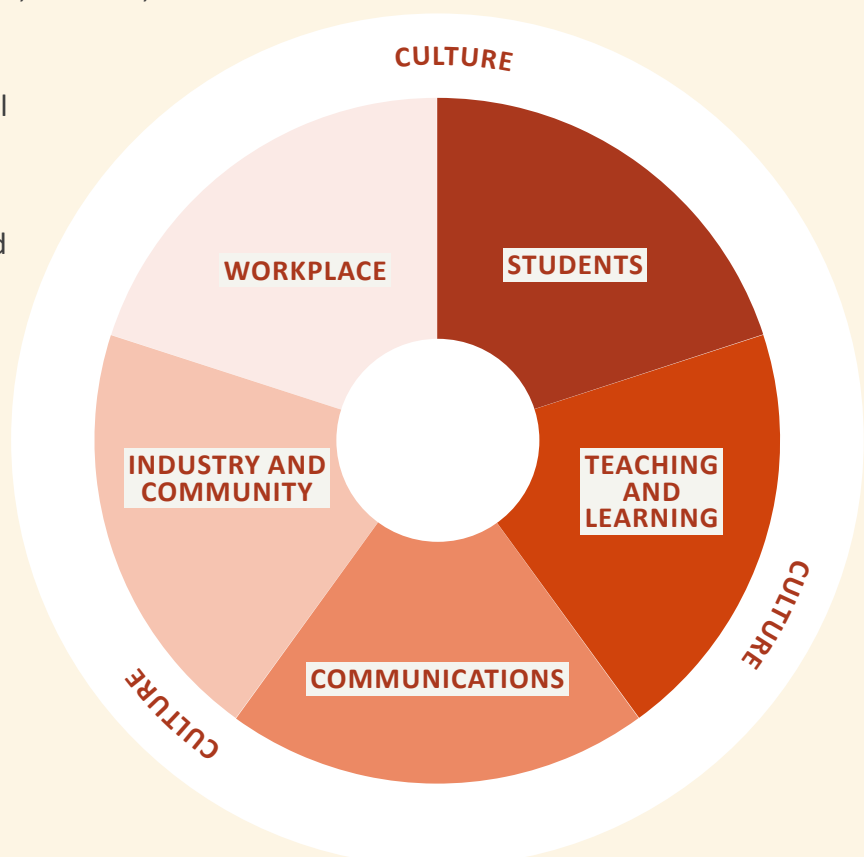
An effective whole-of-institution approach requires focusing on all aspects of how a TAFE operates, to build a culture among staff and students where gender equality and respect is promoted and modelled. Across the TAFE, multiple staff have a key role to play, including TAFE boards, directors, executives, senior managers, Human Resources, educators, students, Student Services and communications.

A whole-of-institution approach requires planned and coordinated actions across **five domains**:

- [workplace](#)
- [students](#)
- [teaching and learning](#)
- [communications](#)
- [industry and community](#).

The term 'culture' encompasses all five of the domains throughout this guide. All domains need to be addressed to ensure that TAFEs have a culture of respect and gender equality.

BELOW: The five key domains of the Respect and Equality approach.



DOMAIN: WORKPLACE



Lead: Board/Senior Executives/Business and Operations/Human Resources

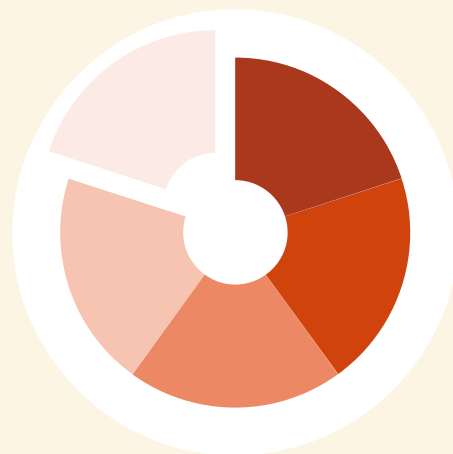
All workplaces have the power to make changes that will support progress towards gender equality in our society. Every workplace conversation, policy and action has the potential to either reinforce or challenge gender inequality and the kinds of attitudes and norms that drive violence.

All TAFE employees including contractors have the right to be safe, respected and to have equal opportunity at work. Building a work environment and culture that promotes gender equality and respect can involve the following elements:

- Establishing structures, strategies and policies that explicitly promote gender equality and respect.
- Ensuring leaders and board members understand the drivers of violence against women and know their legal obligations in relation to gender equality.
- Supporting TAFE board members and staff in rejecting all forms of violence within and outside the workplace and modelling a workplace culture of gender equality and respect.
- Demonstrating that you are a gender equitable institution by proactively reporting to the board on the workplace gender equality indicators (if you are a dual sector institution).
- Embedding the principle of gender equality in staff recruitment, remuneration and promotion processes.
- Ensuring equal access among staff to flexible work options.
- Ensuring staff feel safe to raise concerns about gender inequality and discrimination without adverse consequences.
- Establishing clear policies and procedures to provide on campus support for staff and students who experience violence, bullying or harassment.
- Ensuring that response systems are established for staff and students enduring or escaping family violence or other types of violence (it is important that this is in place prior to implementing this approach).

RESOURCES

Refer to the [Respect and Equality: Self-assessment tool](#). The self-assessment tool will assist with determining where your TAFE is in relation to gender equality so you can tailor your approach to address any opportunities for improvement.



DOMAIN: STUDENTS

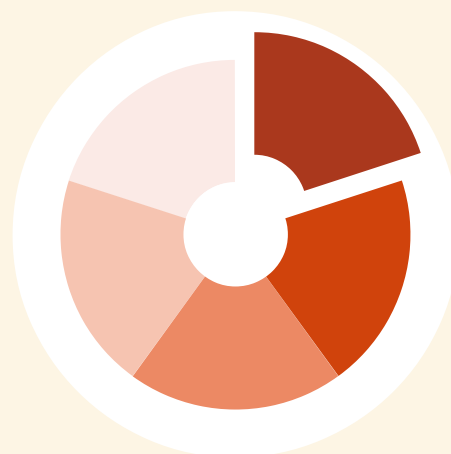


Lead: Student Services/Human Resources (OHS)

Students have the right to a learning environment where they feel safe and respected, and where they have equitable access to opportunities and resources. Students should feel confident to express concerns about violence, and to challenge gender stereotypes, roles and norms.

To engage students with Respect and Equality, actions include:

- Investigating the students' needs, making an effort to capture diverse views and experiences of gender stereotyping and gender inequality from a wide range of students.
- Ensuring structures are in place to respond appropriately to students who experience violence, bullying and sexual harassment.
- Establishing policies and procedures that enable students to raise concerns about gender inequality, violence, harassment or discrimination without adverse consequences.
- Building the confidence of students in using these structures and enacting the policies and procedures.
- Providing opportunities to enhance students' leadership skills in gender equality, for example by seeking student representation in relevant working groups.
- Seeking student input on student-facing policies and decisions about students' rights, respect and gender equality, including opportunities to involve students in the co-design of activities to prevent violence against women.
- Ensuring the student code of conduct makes clear that sexist language, comments, gestures and images are unlawful and unacceptable.
- Empowering students to become gender equality voices for change within the TAFE and within the industries they are entering.
- Reviewing student enrolment processes to identify barriers to accessing and participating in training at TAFE.



DOMAIN: TEACHING AND LEARNING



Lead: Educators

Educators have influence over the way students learn, what they learn, and the environment in which they learn. They have an important role to play in creating equal and respectful classroom cultures where all students can freely participate. Teaching practice that promotes gender equality, inclusivity and respect can have a profound impact on students' classroom experience. Each method and mode of course delivery needs to be included when reviewing teaching practice with a gender lens, for example apprenticeships, traineeships, on-campus and online delivery.

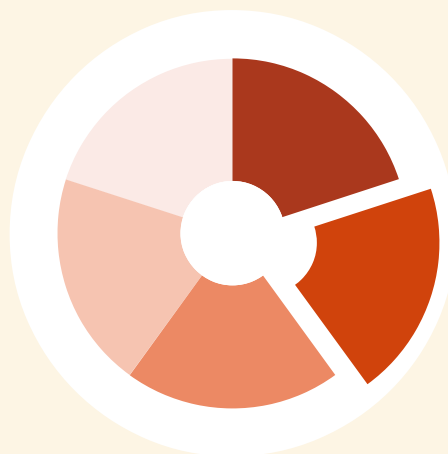
With adequate support and resourcing from leaders, educators can apply the principles of gender equality and respect by:

- Considering opportunities to embed gender equality and violence prevention messages into curriculum content, assessments and field work placements.
- Identifying and creating opportunities to increase students' understanding and awareness of gender inequality and the prevention of violence against women.
- Explaining to students why gender matters in the workplace and at TAFE.

- Examining units of competency and curriculum for gender bias and adapting accordingly where possible.
- Addressing gender, sexuality and racial stereotypes in course curricula to reflect the experiences of diverse populations.
- Reinforcing the importance of respectful relationships, challenging sexism and role modelling gender equitable practices, both in the formal learning environment and outside the classroom.
- Incorporating prevention of violence and gender equality skills and knowledge into the development of new or updated units of competency where an understanding of gender equality is required, such as Health and Community Services, Family Violence, Disability, Aged Care and Child Care, Human Resources, Business Services, Trades, Information Technology and STEM.
- Making new, accredited gender equality and violence prevention training available to students, such as the course in [Gender Equity](#) and the course in the [Prevention of Family Violence and Violence against Women](#).

RESOURCES

Refer to [Respect and Equality: A practice guide for TAFE educators](#) for tips and advice on examining units of competency, classroom delivery, practical placements and assessment using a gender lens.



DOMAIN: COMMUNICATIONS

Lead: Communications/Marketing



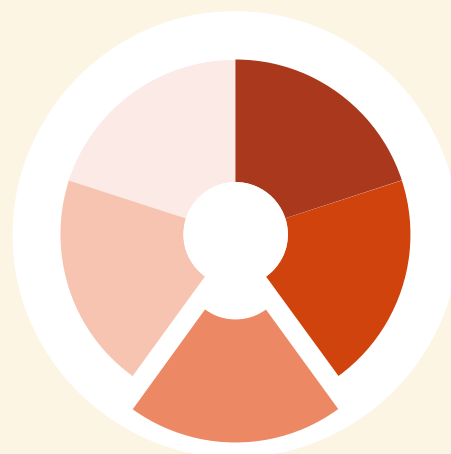
Communications staff can create an organisational understanding of gender equality and the prevention of violence against women across the entire TAFE community, through the promotion of consistent key messages. Ensuring all communication processes explicitly reflect the principles of gender equality and respect, and challenge gender stereotypes, is key to creating a safe, equitable and respectful culture.

Relevant actions for communications and marketing teams include:

- Ensuring all communications and marketing staff understand and are trained in the principles that underpin effective communication to promote gender equality.
- Providing consistent messaging that promotes gender equality and challenges stereotypes using multiple communication strategies via student and staff portals, intranets, newsletters, social media, blogs, student and staff recruitment materials and websites.
- Using accessible and inclusive language in all communications in referring to people of all genders and sexualities without reinforcing biases or gender stereotypes.
- Supporting attitude and behaviour change by promoting gender equality social norms and raising staff and student awareness of the gendered drivers of violence and bystander approaches.
- Ensuring communication strategies engage with and meet the needs of all people and actively address forms of discrimination such as racism, homophobia, sexism and ableism.
- Creating opportunities for students to have active input into social marketing and violence prevention campaigns.
- Considering the genders of student enrolments when developing the digital marketing and advertising strategy for student recruitment, with a view to attracting more women and gender diverse people into masculinised courses and more men and gender diverse people into feminised courses.
- Regularly reviewing student recruitment practices to ensure they do not reinforce harmful gender stereotypes through language and imagery used in communications.

RESOURCES

- [Respect and Equality resources](#)
- [Respect and Equality: Key messages guide](#)



DOMAIN: INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY

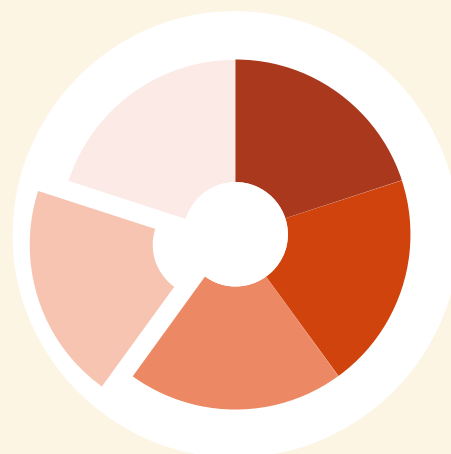


Lead: Student Services/Human Resources/
Skills and Jobs Centres

TAFEs are a trusted and respected part of their local communities and are able to contribute to positive social change. TAFEs have a broad range of successful partnerships and linkages with industry which help drive innovation and therefore are influential in relationships with the sectors they serve and the communities who use their services.

There are many opportunities for TAFEs to influence industry and community partners to help create a more gender equal future. Relevant actions TAFEs can take include:

- Seeking opportunities to connect with industry reference committees and providing input into the training package content and review processes.
- Supporting industry to recruit and support student placements and apprenticeships in non-traditional gendered work.
- Establishing partnerships with local services that provide family violence support, prevention of violence against women and gender equality programs.
- Preparing future workforces to prevent and respond to family violence.
- Recognising that every industry has a role to play in changing structures, attitudes and norms that perpetuate gender inequality.
- Creating opportunities to engage with industry to address challenges and seek industry buy-in for gender equality and the prevention of violence against women.
- Inviting lead industry partners to be part of the Respect and Equality Working group.



Dealing with backlash and resistance

What is backlash and what does it look like?

Backlash is a normal part of the change process as people may feel uncertain, threatened, or disagree with the change being proposed. When you're leading Respect and Equality initiatives in your institution, thinking about backlash as part of your planning will support you to reduce risk, increase engagement and make progress.²⁸

Backlash is a term for the resistance, hostility or aggression with which gender equality or violence prevention strategies are met by some groups. Backlash can be understood as an inevitable response to challenges to male dominance, power or status, and is often interpreted as a sign that such challenges are proving effective.²⁹ Within TAFE, backlash and resistance can come from leaders, staff at all levels of your institution, students, industry partners or from stakeholders in the wider community.³⁰

Backlash can present in different ways including:

- open hostility or aggression about your institutions' commitment and efforts to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women
- complaints about the unfairness of actions and strategies put in place to support women's career advancement
- ignoring or trivialising complaints or allegations of gender-based discrimination and harassment in VET institutions
- undermining, trivialising or de-prioritising initiatives and actions aimed at increasing gender equality.³¹

Why does backlash happen?

Since prevention of violence against women strategies and initiatives begin to challenge existing attitudes, behaviours and social norms,

those who strongly support these norms and see them as traditional or natural are likely to feel resentful, threatened or anxious. As such, these initiatives are often met with deliberate and intensive efforts to maintain existing gender norms and structures or to slow progress towards gender equality. Backlash can have the effect of hindering or reversing progress towards violence prevention and gender equality and in rare cases backlash can lead to an increase in violence itself. The existence of backlash should not deter your institution from pursuing gender equality.³²

Strategies to address and reduce backlash

1. Engage all staff, student representatives and key industry partners in the process of institutional change

Your institution can work to minimise backlash by involving diverse stakeholders in discussions about the process of change. Backlash and resistance are not only demonstrated by men but by some women and gender diverse people as well. Therefore, you may need to be deliberate about engaging those who you think are likely to be resistant to change or who have already started to show some resistance. Engaging staff will look different in different institutions but there are three key things that are important to consider:

- **Communicate about change** to keep staff informed of upcoming changes, why your institution thinks they are necessary, how it will benefit everyone and how the changes are supported by your institution's values and leadership.³³
- **Provide opportunities for staff, students and stakeholders to ask questions and give feedback** in a safe and constructive environment. For example, by deliberately creating opportunities for discussion during team meetings or at lunchtime briefings.³⁴

- **Engage men in a meaningful manner** that helps them to understand the drivers and impacts of violence and invest their time and skills in changing it. As 94 per cent of women who experienced violence since the age of 15 did so at the hands of a male perpetrator, it is important to include them in prevention work and to minimise backlash and resistance.³⁵ Yet, while doing so, women’s empowerment must remain at the forefront and care must be taken not to reproduce the very gender power imbalances and dynamics that this work is seeking to challenge.³⁶

2. Identify possible sites of backlash

Some questions that might help you identify sites of backlash include:

- Are there any staff members or teams that have shown resistance to institutional change or gender equality initiatives in the past?
- Who might be most affected by the advancement of gender equality in our institution?
- Are there sites or teams in our institution that show more disrespect towards women (for example, a site where it is known that sexist jokes are common)?³⁷

3. Make sure your working group members have the knowledge, skills, and support they need to respond to backlash

Working group members, managers, and leaders may be the most appropriate people to deal with backlash. It is important to have a number of people prepared to address backlash because it may not always be directed at those leading the work.³⁸

For example, it is common for communications staff to be on the receiving end of negative or critical emails or phone calls, so it is useful for someone in the communications team to be prepared to communicate the importance and relevance of the work being done.³⁹ The [Respect and Equality: Key messages guide](#) can provide some clarity on how to explain the importance of the work.

Your institution also needs to be ready to support staff to take action in response to acts of backlash or resistance that contravene workplace policies or current legislation; for example, a manager changing someone’s hours as a way of punishing them for speaking up.⁴⁰

It is important that support is provided to those who are affected by backlash, for example, counselling through an Employee Assistance Program.⁴¹

4. Proactively communicate and model respectful conduct

A clearly stated institutional commitment by leaders can be used to counter views and behaviours which undermine the validity of gender equality as an institutional goal. Additionally, it is also useful for the commitment to be explicit about which backlash behaviours and practices are unacceptable and emphasise that these behaviours will not be tolerated and will be addressed.⁴²

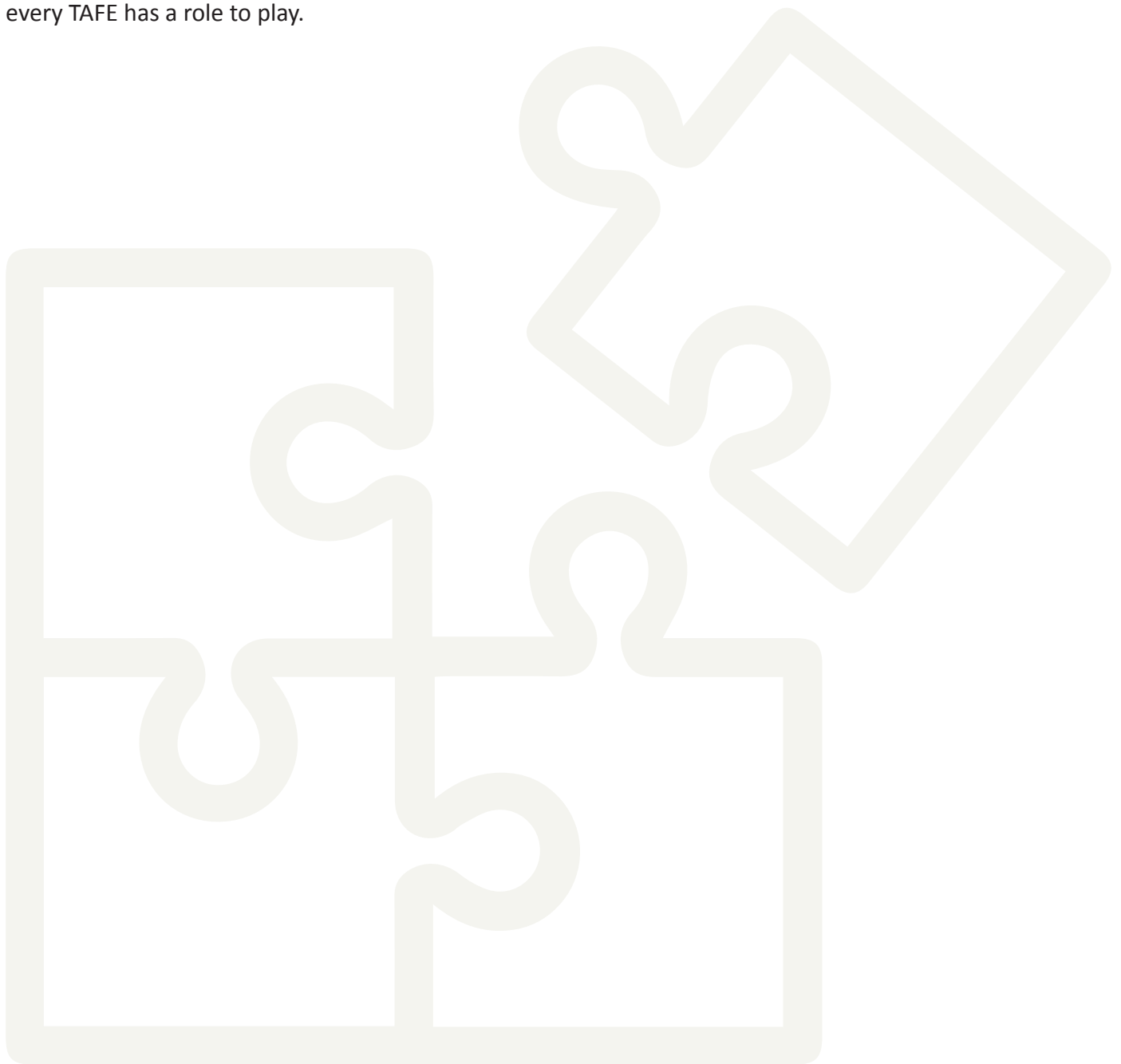
Staff who have responsibility for communications and media are well placed to promote gender equality. As noted, they can prepare statements that express your institute’s commitment to Respect and Equality. Communications staff can also assist by providing information to key staff on how to respond to backlash and resistance on social media or in emails and by drafting sample responses.⁴³

RESOURCES

- [Workplace Equality and Respect Practice guidance: Dealing with backlash](#) (Our Watch resource)
- [Understanding, monitoring and responding to resistance and backlash](#) (Respect Victoria and Our Watch resource)
- [Framework for identifying and addressing resistance & backlash](#) (Respect Victoria and Our Watch resource)
- [\(En\)countering resistance: Strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives](#) (VicHealth resource)

Bringing it all together

Across our society, if we all work together, as educators, as employers and as a community, we can change this picture of gender inequality and stop violence against women before it starts. In achieving the vision of an Australia free from violence, every TAFE has a role to play.



VISION

FOR RESPECT AND EQUALITY IN TAFE AND VET INSTITUTIONS

TAFEs are leaders in preventing violence against women, and provide safe, welcoming and respectful environments for all.

1. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Build a working group and appoint a sponsor with seniority and adequate support to lead and coordinate a whole-of-institute approach across the five domains.



2. TAKE ACTION AND TRACK PROGRESS

DOMAIN	WORKPLACE	STUDENTS	TEACHING AND LEARNING	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY
LEAD	Leaders/ Business and Operations/HR	Student Services/ HR (OHS)	Educators	Communications/ Marketing	Student Services/ HR/Skills and Jobs Centres
ACTION	TAFE workplace structures, strategies and policies that promote gender equality are established and reviewed.	With active involvement from students TAFEs are gender equitable environments where students are safe and respected.	Course delivery modes incorporate and promote gender equality and respect into teaching practice.	Gender equality and respect are integrated into TAFE communications.	TAFE actively engages with industry and community partners for a gender equal future.

3. TRANSFORM BUSINESS AS USUAL

1. TAFEs enable **gender equality** in education over the life course.
2. TAFEs are vocational-educators and **employers of choice** for women.
3. TAFEs **say no** to discrimination, sexism, harassment and violence against women.
4. TAFE campuses are **safe places** where students and staff are treated with respect.

PART 2

**Implementing Respect
and Equality in your
institution**

An effective approach to preventing violence against women and promoting gender equality in TAFE needs to be:

-  tailored to suit the individual resources, capacity and needs of the TAFE

-  owned and driven by the TAFE

-  supported by a long-term strategy

-  evidence-based

-  focused on changing organisational culture

-  a process of continual improvement

Using Respect and Equality to guide you, you can ensure the activities your institution undertakes are evidence-based, aligned to your strategy, and achieve the change you want to see.

The Respect and Equality approach supports you to define the issues and challenge assumptions about gender by:

- conducting a workplace gender audit and Respect and Equality self-assessments
- undertaking a gender impact assessment of policies, programs and services
- developing and implementing an action plan, and
- monitoring the implementation.

Building on one another, the eight steps in this approach will guide you in the development, implementation and monitoring of a Respect and Equality action plan that is tailored to the needs and context of your institution.

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION



- STEP 1.** Connect with staff assigned to lead the work and align with existing objectives
- STEP 2.** Gather information about gender equality
- STEP 3.** Complete the Respect and Equality self-assessment process
- STEP 4.** Develop a Respect and Equality action plan
- STEP 5.** Develop a monitoring plan
- STEP 6.** Establish partnerships with staff and departments across your institution and with industry and community
- STEP 7.** Implement your Respect and Equality action plan
- STEP 8.** Monitor and revise action plan on a regular basis to embed respect and equality into your institution

Eight steps for implementation

Step 1. Connect and align

A range of different staff will be key in leading planned and coordinated actions across the five domains. It is essential that these staff members are engaged from the very beginning.

Connecting with staff assigned to lead the work

To lead and coordinate work across the TAFE, it is a good idea to establish a Respect and Equality Working group. The working group should have representation of staff from each of the five domains, and comprise executive members, managers and leaders from across the TAFE. Understanding their perspectives, unique barriers and opportunities and the support they might need along the way is key to success and sustainability. As the Respect and Equality Working group is brought together, it can be helpful for the group to review and leverage existing initiatives and auditing processes to support work on gender equality, both within your institution and with your partners in the community.

Investing time and effort early into building relationships and capacity with these leaders across the TAFE will help to increase readiness for change, build support for action, and manage resistance. Leaders may need support to make the link between gender inequality, gender stereotypes, individual attitudes, social norms and violence against women.

It can also be helpful to develop and share a business case that outlines the benefits for TAFE and specific departments engaging in this work. You can draw on the [Respect and Equality case studies](#) and [key messages](#) to support your business case.

To assist you with building the knowledge of your leaders and your working group about gender equality, the prevention of violence against women and the key elements of the approach, you can use the Respect and Equality capability workshop materials designed for:

- TAFE leaders and working group members
- Educators and education leaders
- Administrative staff.

For effective delivery of these workshops, link with an expert in gender equality and family violence prevention who can facilitate the workshops. These workshop PowerPoints and facilitator notes are available on the [Respect and Equality website](#).

Aligning with existing objectives

Undertaking organisational change to promote gender equality can be a complex process, requiring the involvement of all staff members, and student participation. Leveraging off existing pieces of organisational activity and strategic directions, as well as broader state-wide or national initiatives, can enhance buy-in and outcomes. The more you can highlight how your work can feed into or complement existing commitments and strategies, or support reporting requirements, the easier it will be to get others on board. This could include reviewing the stated commitments of your institution (including mission statements, strategic plans, value statements and principles, etc.) or the requirements under current legislation and the standards of the national regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

Step 2. Gather information

As you engage leaders across the TAFE, you should also be conducting a gender equality 'stocktake' of your institution, to understand what already exists and identify where opportunities may lie for improvement.

You will need to collect and review data about gender equality within your institution. This is likely to require a desktop review of policies and procedures as well as consultation with key Human Resources, data custodians and Student Services staff.

Numbers rarely tell the whole story, but they do offer a way to identify where attention is needed. Collecting data can support you in:

- reflecting on the status of gender equality in your organisation
- establishing a baseline to enable you to track your progress
- engaging in critical discussion of barriers in your workplace
- making the case for resourcing needed to promote gender equality
- developing a good understanding of the student cohorts attending your TAFE
- understanding and monitoring gender segregation in particular courses by reviewing student gender-disaggregated data in course enrolments and completions, and to develop actions based on this data

As you collect data, it is important to create space to learn about the way that factors other than gender may also impact on someone's experience in the TAFE, including the types of discrimination and disadvantage that they experience. This will help you to ensure that the actions you take are meaningful, accessible and responsive to the experience of the entire student and staff community.

The Respect and Equality approach recommends that the first step is to do a desktop review of policies, procedures and practices and then undertake a self-assessment.

Dual-sector institutions

Dual-sector institutions will already be collecting data to meet the [WGEA](#) requirements.

Similarly, universities may be collecting additional data as part of a [SAGE Athena SWAN](#) Award application that can also be used.

Gender equality data collection – Workplace domain (staff)

It's important to complete the data collection process outlined in this approach to create a baseline of gender equality across your institution.

A key component of the process is to undertake a workplace gender audit which draws on data that is broken down for women, men and gender diverse people, to understand if any groups are disadvantaged in the workplace based on their gender.

When undertaking an audit, it is important for TAFEs to collect, investigate and respond to data collected against the following workplace gender equality indicators:

1. Ratio of men to women in the TAFE workforce, overall and by departments.
2. Ratio of men to women in leadership and management positions, including board, executive, senior and middle management levels.
3. Ratio of men and women in new hires and internal promotions, by level and department.

4. Average salary gap between women and men staff members, across the organisation and by department.
5. Comparison of men and women staff and managers who use flexible work arrangements.
6. Comparison of men and women staff who use and return from parental leave with continued employment for 12 months.
7. Changes in staff perception of workplace culture as measured by annual staff survey.
8. Reported incidence of sex-based discrimination and harassment.

Gender equality data can be gathered via your workforce data from payroll, Human Resources or case management systems. Employee experience data can be sourced via existing staff surveys such as the People Matters Employee Surveys (or equivalent); an analysis of your existing staff data, such as employment status by gender and age; complaints data; board and committee composition by gender; and through the self-assessment process.

The audit can be completed in accordance with the templates and tools on the [Our Watch Workplace Equality and Respect website](#), such as the staff survey template and the workplace gender equality indicators. The [Workplace Equality and Respect survey](#) is a guiding mechanism for staff to give feedback on their experiences in the workplace.

While conducting the audit it is important to consider intersectionality (refer to [page 12](#)). Gender inequality may be compounded by the impacts of disadvantage or discrimination someone might experience on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, and other factors. Therefore, you may choose to disaggregate data based on age, ethnicity, disability etc. to understand how these factors influence gender inequality within your workplace. For example this may include determining the ratio of women of colour in leadership and management positions.

RESOURCES

- [Workplace Gender Equality Indicators](#) (Our Watch resource)
- [Staff Survey](#) (Our Watch resource)

Gender equality data collection – Student domain

The Respect and Equality approach recognises the importance of gathering and reviewing data about gender equality for students in your institution. A desktop review of student enrolment and completion data, enrolments in specific courses by gender, numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, etc., can provide you with insight into the student cohorts and demographics. Demographic data can help you to better understand the student cohort – for example you may want to look at people of different ages, international students, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ people, or students with disability.

Our Watch recommends that gathering student data include, at a minimum:

- the percentage of male, female and gender diverse students, overall and by course enrolment and completion.
- student demographics: Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race and sexual orientation.
- gender disaggregated data, if available, on the number of students who are balancing caring commitments or returning to study following parental leave.
- student perceptions of TAFE culture as measured by annual surveys such as ‘student experience surveys’, if available.
- student perceptions on educators applying a gendered lens to their teaching practices.

You may wish to review and update your existing ‘student experience surveys’ to ensure they include questions about gender, cultural identity, disability and age and how gender impacts their experience at TAFE.

Further approaches to collecting data

In addition to the data collection methods already stated you will need to consider what additional information you may need to collect about any existing work and investigate how gender impacts your staff, students and community. Staff and students' gender can affect their needs and experiences at TAFE. Think about how the current policies, programs and services meet the needs of people of different genders; and how they address inequality and promote equality.

Your institution's policies, programs and services can impact people of different genders in different ways; therefore, it is important to conduct gender impact assessments.

Undertaking gender impact assessments can support your institution in understanding how policies, programs and services are accessed and experienced by students and other stakeholders. This is an important data source to inform future actions that your institution can take to promote gender equality.

What do policy, programs and services look like in TAFE?

Some examples:

Policies – Student sexual harassment policy; equal access policy.

Programs – Vocational education courses provided; educators' delivery and assessment pedagogy.

Services – Student Services; ESL supports. Consider how your institution currently promotes equality and addresses inequality. To undertake this data collection, you can include:

Policies

- Map existing policies, operating structures and partnerships that present an opportunity to promote or influence gender equality within the organisation or the community.
- Undertake a review of current resources, supports, relevant policies and procedures for staff and students, to look for differences in the way processes and policies are likely to impact differently on women, men and gender diverse people.

- Consider if staff and students who are impacted by the policies and procedures are included in the decision making around the issues that affect them.
- Review sexual harassment policies, including safe reporting and referral pathways for staff and students who experience sexual harassment.

Programs

- Consider what type of assumptions are made about women, men and gender diverse people in the TAFE's vocational education learning programs and how they are delivered by educators.
- Map existing student and staff groups, collectives, online forums, events and activities that focus on equality and social justice.
- Seek staff and students' views on the differences in how women, men and gender diverse people undertake and benefit from the units of competency they undertake.
- Apply a gendered lens to investigate and analyse the underrepresentation of women and gender diverse people in masculinised courses, and of men and gender diverse people in feminised courses.
- Seek gendered information on your student outcomes following course completion, such as employment, pay gaps, work role status (some of this information can be obtained via National Centre for Vocational Education Research [student outcomes data](#)).

Services

- Investigate the internal family violence support services for staff and students, and the local service system.
- Investigate how accessible and inclusive the internal support services are to students.
- Investigate the barriers students may face in accessing TAFE and completing courses (fee structures, student loans, family commitments, ESL supports, etc.).
- Conduct research/reviews on students' experiences of sexual harassment and assault on campus or within their industry placements.

Leadership

- Seek leaders' views on the most significant issues for staff and students in relation to respect and gender equality.
- Undertake a training needs analysis with members of your Respect and Equality Working group and arrange training for the members if needed.
- Find evidence of your institution's commitment to promoting gender equality and respect through engagement with students, staff, industry partners and the community.

Consultation as you undertake this process

Consultation is essential so that everyone in the TAFE community has opportunities to provide feedback on their experiences at TAFE, to identify the ways gender influences and shapes their work and study lives, and to provide feedback on their experience of the Respect and Equality approach.

As you collect data, it is important to create space to learn about the way that factors other than gender may also impact on someone's experience in TAFE, including discrimination and disadvantage that they encounter due to these factors. This will help you to ensure that the actions you take are meaningful, accessible and responsive to the experience of the student and staff community.

To understand what needs to change and why, staff and students should be asked about the current situation and what they would like the future to look like. Without feedback and input, some aspects of gender inequality may remain hidden, and you could end up prioritising inappropriate and ineffective actions. As part of this process, you may decide to consult with stakeholders outside your institution, such as key partners in industry and the local community, to understand their experiences of your institution's culture and practices.

All the information collected so far will help you prepare for the next step, which is to assess your institution under the five domains.

Safely engaging with staff and students

Throughout any change process, meaningful engagement with staff and students is critical. Consultation and engagement processes can be great opportunities to raise awareness and increase understanding of violence against women and to positively influence TAFE culture.

While these conversations about gender equality and violence are necessary and useful, they can be uncomfortable and bring up sensitive issues. It's important, therefore, that you ensure confidentiality where needed and provide safe and supportive opportunities for people to speak frankly. You should also make sure that anyone gathering information is equipped to answer common questions and concerns that arise, has the backing of leaders and is provided with opportunities to debrief.

Step 3. Complete the self-assessment

This section asks you to consider where you are now, where you want to be and how you will get there. The aim of the self-assessment is to establish where your institution is in relation to gender equality so you can then tailor your approach to address any opportunities for improvement.

Now that you have gathered desktop data, conducted surveys and consulted with key people, completing the self-assessment across the five domains will help you understand where good practice is currently happening and where further action is needed. It will focus your planning in the areas most likely to yield the results needed to create a TAFE that actively promotes gender equality and respect and the prevention of violence against women.

A self-assessment tool has been developed specifically for TAFEs to support reflection on the experience of preventing violence against women and promoting gender equality. The tool outlines how to go about undertaking the self-assessment in your institution. It provides information about what to look for under each of the domains, as well as examples of actions you can take to progress your work.

The self-assessment tool on the [Respect and Equality website](#) will guide you through this process, including setting up assessment workshops and conducting the self-assessment. The workshops provide an opportunity to engage staff (and students, when assessing the student domain) from different departments and levels of your institution so that you can capture a range of experiences and better understand the factors that may enable or impede change. The group that undertakes the self-assessment might be from the Respect and Equality Working group, or it may involve others.

You may wish to have someone within the TAFE facilitate the self-assessment process, or to seek support from a gender equality expert to assist you. The facilitator will help your group stay within the allotted time, provide additional information and steer you through

tricky discussions. An external facilitator can challenge usual ways of thinking, to overcome power imbalances and to bring expertise and examples to enrich discussions. Whoever is chosen as a facilitator should be familiar with the gender data that you have collated during Step 2.

The findings from the Respect and Equality self-assessment may assist you to identify where there is a need to develop or review policies, programs or services, based on the areas for improvement that have been identified. Ensure you apply an intersectional approach to consider how gender inequality can be compounded by disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of other factors such as age, disability or ethnicity. You can use the [Respect and Equality: Intersectionality in practice guide](#) to support this work.

All the information you have gathered so far will inform the development and directions of your Respect and Equality action plan across each of the domains.

RESOURCES

- [Respect and Equality: Intersectionality in practice guide](#)
- [Respect and Equality: Self-assessment tool](#)

Step 4. Develop an action plan

The results of the work that you have undertaken in steps 1–3 of this approach will indicate the current status of gender equality in your TAFE. This will provide a basis for you to plan strategies, actions and measures that both build on your strengths and address areas that need improvement.

Planning processes are as diverse as TAFEs themselves, so it's up to you how to develop your Respect and Equality action plan. An action plan template is available from the [Respect and Equality website](#).






When developing your action plan, it might be tempting to select a few actions that sound easy to achieve, but it's important your choice of actions is deliberate and appropriate for your institution. You'll need to base your actions on the consultations, data collection and the self-assessment you have completed.

Mapping out how one action or achievement leads to the next will show whether you're on track to meet your long-term goals. Consider which actions might support other actions – for example, making sure that changes to one policy are reflected in other relevant policies. It's also important that you plan for change that builds over time. Once you identify your goals and gaps, use available evidence about what works to plan how you will achieve the desired outcomes.

RESOURCES

- [Respect and Equality: Action Plan](#)
- [Sample Gantt chart](#)

BELOW: Examples of key actions under the domains.

DOMAIN	EXAMPLE ACTION	
WORKPLACE	Review recruitment and promotion practices with a gender and diversity lens, ensuring practices are cognisant of and challenge biases and assumptions.	
STUDENTS	Enable student engagement by involving students in the co-design of family violence prevention activities.	
TEACHING AND LEARNING	Provide professional development opportunities for educators to learn how to apply a gender lens to their teaching practices.	
COMMUNICATIONS	Review and update your communications strategy to promote gender equality and the prevention of violence against women.	
INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY	Create opportunities for industry and partners to get involved in addressing gender inequality in their own work environments.	

Step 5. Develop your monitoring plan

Monitoring and reflection is an important part of understanding your progress and will help guide adaptations as you implement your Respect and Equality action plan.

Attitude and behaviour change can be a slow process, and transforming structures that give rise to gender inequality takes time. Each individual, team and department of your institution will go through different stages of change, so regular monitoring and reflection will help make sure your actions are appropriate to support sustained change.

It is important to consider what outcomes could be reasonably achieved over a period of time and to document the steps taken to achieve this outcome. This might include, for example, the establishment of governance structures to support gender equality, or the identification of staff who have a leadership role in promoting gender equality and preventing violence against women in TAFE.

For guidance on how to develop a simple monitoring plan see the [Respect and Equality: Monitoring guide](#).

RESOURCES

[Respect and Equality: Monitoring guide](#)

Step 6. Establish partnerships

Effective partnerships are a central ingredient to the success of the whole-of-institute approach and to implementing your Respect and Equality action plan. Partnerships include internal partners, external stakeholders, community, industry and students.

Internal collaborations

TAFE staff and the departments they represent are major contributors to the success of the program. The gender equality working group will assist in coordinating and implementing the action plan in partnership with your institution's leadership team, senior managers, Human Resources, educators, students, Student Services and communications teams.

Students

Engaging students as partners will help ensure that actions are relevant and engaging for this audience. Consider early how you will engage students and who else may need to support this process. You may need to work closely with Student Services, or partner with educators to integrate new content into classroom activities, curriculum, assessment and fieldwork opportunities.

Engaging students as partners

Suggestions:

- Set up a student working group enabling students to have input in the design, direction and implementation of relevant activities.
- Engage students by using a co-design approach to work together on prevention campaigns such as 16 Days of Activism and those connected to International Women's Day.
- Invite the student group to review, analyse and contribute to an update of student-facing policies and procedures.
- Identify opportunities to influence curriculum by working with educators and students to incorporate knowledge of gender equality and prevention of violence against women into the curriculum and assessments.
- Invite contributions from media and communications students to assist with designing and delivering relevant elements of the gender equality communications plan.

Community partners

Ultimately our goal in this work is to provide a safe, inclusive and respectful place for all members of the community, regardless of age, race, ability, socioeconomic status or gender. While this may seem overwhelming, it is not necessary for one organisation to be an expert on all these social issues. Having a relationship or partnerships with a specialist organisation can be a way to gain expert advice, ensure strategies are relevant to the population at hand, and build your own skills and knowledge.

TAFEs can establish and nurture connections with external specialist agencies in the local area by:

- Developing relationships with external partners that specialise in gender equality and the prevention of violence against women.
- Joining a local area gender equality or primary prevention of violence against women program such as Communities of Practice, to enable increased capacity in gender equality and create opportunities for shared activities and collaborative efforts.
- Seeking partnership with local family violence and sexual assault services. Hearing from response services can help prevention workers keep sight of people's lived experiences of family violence and other forms of violence against women.
- Connecting with specialist services, to provide vital supports to the diverse population of staff and students within your institution. For example, connecting with specialist services that support people with disability, LGBTIQ people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, or migrant and refugee communities can support you in better understanding your staff and student cohort.

Local industry

Where possible, engage with local industry and include them on relevant working groups and program activities. Seek opportunities to engage with industry representatives such as unions or industry peak bodies.

Some ideas:

- Explore how your institution and industry can work together to desegregate specific professions and industries that tend to be dominated by one gender, and how to increase the gender balance in that workforce.
- Promote workplaces that are safe and inclusive for all people.
- Study the pay and working conditions in feminised industries, especially those occupied by women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Step 7. Implement your action plan

Once you have consulted staff, students and industry and community partners, collated the information gathered, and developed a robust Respect and Equality action plan and accompanying monitoring framework, the next step is implementation.

As you take action, remember the importance of partnerships with students, staff and other stakeholders and of communicating your work internally and externally. Connecting with others leading prevention work in TAFEs, schools or workplaces can support your work.

The Our Watch [Workplace Equality and Respect website](#) contains examples of good practice in workplace equality and provides guidance materials on a range of areas including:

- [engaging leaders and securing commitment](#)
- [supporting cultural change](#)
- [communicating with staff and stakeholders](#)
- [responding to staff who experience violence or harassment](#)
- [dealing with backlash and resistance.](#)

Working towards gender equality and the prevention of violence against women is a long-term process requiring cultural and structural change. Your action plan is a part of a long-term process, requiring you to review and report on your progress each year to evaluate what impact your efforts are having, and adjust your action plan accordingly.

Step 8. Monitor and review action plans

Once you have collected and analysed monitoring data, it's important to interpret the results and reflect on what this means for the activities you have implemented, the adaptations required and the next steps you should take.

TAFEs should consider how to bring together key stakeholders and different perspectives when reflecting on and interpreting the monitoring data. The Respect and Equality Working group plays an important role in contributing to the analysis of, and reflection on, data collected. This group can provide valuable insights into refining your approach in response to lessons learned, and how to report and share your learnings with a wider audience.

It's also critical to pause and recognise success. Celebrating and communicating the gains you have made will increase people's engagement with the work and help support further work. Reflecting on what has worked and what has not will support the formulation of more effective actions and support continuous improvement and more effective change in the long term.

Tools and resources

Building capability among leaders and staff

Our Watch resources:

- [Change the story: A shared framework for the prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia](#)
- [Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities](#)
- [Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children](#)
- [Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women](#)
- [Men in focus practice guide: Addressing masculinities and working with men in the prevention of men's violence against women](#)

Our Watch webpages:

- [Quick facts](#) about violence against women
- [Prevention Handbook](#)

Training opportunities:

- [Course in Gender Equity – 22521VIC](#) (nationally recognised training course)
- [Course in Identifying and Responding to Family Violence Risk – 22510VIC](#) (nationally recognised training course)
- [Introduction to Preventing Violence Against Women](#) (GenVic eLearning module)
- [Mentors in Violence Prevention Program](#) (Women's Health Tasmania workshops)
- [Preventing Gender Based Violence: Your Role in the Community](#) (YWCA Canberra online training)
- [Prevention and Response Training](#) (Safe and Equal online professional development and training courses)
- [Recognise and respond to domestic and family violence](#) (Women's Safety Services SA training)
- [Women's Health Victoria](#) training

Training tools:

- [Be an Active Bystander – A guide to helping when you see family violence and abuse](#) (SafeSteps)
- [Respect and Equality capability workshop materials](#) (Our Watch)

Evaluation and monitoring tools:

- [Evaluating Victorian projects for the primary prevention of violence against women: A concise guide](#) (VicHealth)
- [Respect and Equality: Monitoring guide](#) (Our Watch)
- [SAMPLE Respect and Equality: Action Plan](#) (Our Watch)

Workplace

Websites:

- [Women's Health Tasmania](#)
- [Women's Safety Services South Australia](#)
- [Workplace Equality and Respect](#)
- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency](#)
- [YWCA Canberra](#)

Resources:

- [Preventing and responding to sexual harassment: A quick guide for employers](#) (Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission)
- [Respect and Equality: Key messages](#) (Our Watch)
- [Respect and Equality: Self-assessment tool](#) (Our Watch)
- [Sex discrimination](#) (Australian Human Rights Commission)
- [Workplace equality: A model for preventing violence against migrant and refugee women](#) (Multicultural Centre for Women's Health)

Students

Professional development for Student Services:

- [Family Violence Regional Integration Committees](#)

Teaching and learning

Resources:

- [No limitations: Breaking down gender stereotypes in the early years](#) (Women's Health East)
- [Older, better, together: The primary prevention of elder abuse by prevention networks](#) (Seniors Rights Victoria)
- [Respect and Equality: A practice guide for TAFE educators](#) (Our Watch)
- [Teaching gender equity: a toolkit for teaching gender equity units of competency](#) (Women's Health Victoria)

Websites:

- [Equality and Respect in Sport](#) (Our Watch)
- [Media Making Change](#) (Our Watch)
- [Preventing Violence against Women with Disabilities: Resources to support prevention, social services and disability workforces](#) (Women with Disabilities Victoria)
- [Respectful Relationships Education](#) (Our Watch)
- [Workplace Equality and Respect](#) (Our Watch)

Communications

Websites:

- [16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence](#) (UN Women)
- [International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women](#) (United Nations)
- [The Line](#) (Our Watch)

Resources:

- [Communications Guidelines for Preventing Violence Against Women](#) (Women's Health in the North)
- [Framing masculinity: Message guide](#) (VicHealth)

Policy

- [National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022](#) (Council of Australian Governments resource)
- [National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032](#)
- [The Australian policy context](#) (ANROWS webpage)
- [Australian policy & key documents on violence against women](#) (Action to Prevent Violence Against Women Gender Equity Victoria webpage)
- [Domestic and family violence prevention and response](#) (Community Door webpage)

Glossary

Ableism – The system of beliefs, processes and practices that privilege people without disabilities, and disadvantage and exclude people with disabilities.⁴⁴ These beliefs include dominant ideas and expectations about typical abilities of people’s bodies and minds. Society applies these standards to determine who is worthy, able or ‘normal’, and discriminates against and disadvantages people who fail to meet this imaginary standard.⁴⁵

Ageism – The system of beliefs, processes and practices that disadvantage and discriminate against people in particular age groups, especially older people and young people.

Backlash/resistance – the resistance, hostility or aggression with which gender equality or violence prevention strategies are met by some groups. From a feminist perspective, backlash can be understood as an inevitable response to challenges to male dominance, power or status, and is often interpreted as a sign that such challenges are proving effective.⁴⁶

Bystander – someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination, or any other form of inappropriate or violent behaviour. People who witness such behaviour (but who are not involved either as perpetrators or victims/survivors) are in a position to be powerful allies in challenging sexist and discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

Bystander intervention – bystander approaches focus on the ways in which those who are not themselves direct targets of sexism, abuse or disrespect can identify, intervene and engage others in challenging such attitudes, practices and behaviours. Bystander intervention is a primary prevention approach because it aims to help reduce the social sanctioning or condoning of the

attitudes, behaviours and practices that drive violence against women.

Cisgender – A person whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth. The term ‘cis’ is often used as an abbreviation.

Cisnormative/cisnormativity – Refers to a general perspective that sees cisgender experiences as the only, or central, view of the world. This includes the assumption that all people fall into one of two distinct and complementary genders (man and woman) which corresponds to their sex assigned at birth, or what is called the gender binary. It also relates to the systemic and structural privileging of the social models of binary sex and gender.

Colonisation – refers to the act of the British invading and claiming the land now called Australia, thereby dispossessing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who had previously lived on and been custodians of these lands for thousands of years. It also refers to the ongoing settlement and establishment of British colonies, and later the Australian nation. It is not only a historical act but also an ongoing process, in particular because there has been no treaty or other form of settlement or agreement, and because many contemporary laws, policies and practices fail to recognise the specific status and human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Indigenous peoples; but also because it continues to have significant impacts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today.

Disclosure – when someone tells another person about violence they have experienced, perpetrated or witnessed. Undertaking activities to prevent violence against women can often lead to an increase in disclosures. This is because effective primary prevention initiatives

raise awareness about harmful attitudes and behaviours, and create a safe space for people to discuss their experiences.

Domestic violence – refers to acts of violence that occur in domestic settings between two people who are, or were, in an intimate relationship. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse.⁴⁷ See also Family violence.

Dominant forms of masculinity – the particular attitudes, norms, stereotypes, roles and practices that men are expected to support, conform to or participate in, and that operate at and across structural, systemic, organisational, community, interpersonal and individual levels of society.

Emotional/psychological violence – can include a range of controlling behaviours such as control of finances, isolation from family and friends, continual humiliation, threats against children or being threatened with injury or death.⁴⁸

Evidence-based – models, approaches or practices found to be effective through evaluation or peer-reviewed research. Evidence is usually published and may be found in full or summarised in academic research documents, organisational reports, program evaluations, policy papers and submissions. There is a strong evidence base for strategies to prevent violence against women. As our understanding of what drives violence against women in different population groups and settings increases, the evidence base will continue to evolve.

Family violence – a broader term than domestic violence, as it refers not only to violence between intimate partners but also to violence between family members.⁴⁹ This includes, for example, elder abuse and adolescent violence against parents. Family violence includes violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes that family member to be fearful.⁵⁰ In Indigenous communities, family violence is often the preferred term as it encapsulates the broader issue of violence within extended

families, kinship networks and community relationships, as well as intergenerational issues.⁵¹ For LGBTIQ people, ‘family’ may be defined as the ‘chosen family’ sometimes created in the context of rejection by biological families, but there is no research on violence in this context.⁵²

Gender – the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender defines masculinity and femininity. Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.

Gender-based violence – violence that is specifically ‘directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately’.

Gender equality⁵³ – involves equality for people of all genders. This term is used in the substantive sense to mean not only equality of opportunity but also equal or just outcomes (sometimes also called equity). It requires the redistribution of power, resources and responsibilities between men and women in particular, and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures that create and sustain gender inequality.

Gender initiatives – the process to achieve gender equality. Gender initiatives recognise that women and gender diverse people are not in the same ‘starting position’ as men, and that treating people the same way may not result in fairness.

Gender lens – a way to make gender visible by investigating whether policies, laws, regulations and opportunities have different effects on women and men, or whether they reproduce harmful gender stereotypes or gender-based discrimination.

Gender roles – functions and responsibilities expected to be fulfilled by women and men, boys and girls within society or culture.

Gender disaggregated data – data that is broken down separately for women, men and gender diverse people.

Heteronormativity – a belief and general perspective that sees heterosexuality as the only ‘normal’ sexual orientation, and heterosexual experiences as the only, or central, view of the world. This perspective also assumes a linear relationship between sex, gender and sexuality (for example: male, man, heterosexual man), and is based on and reinforces the systemic and structural privileging of binary models of sex and gender, that assume a person’s sex and gender identity corresponds to their sex assigned at birth.

Intersectionality – describes the interactions between multiple systems and structures of oppression (such as sexism, racism, classism, ageism, ableism, heteronormativity and cissexism), as well as policy and legal contexts (such as immigration status). It acknowledges that some people are subject to multiple forms of oppression and ‘the experience is not just the sum of its parts’.⁵⁴ An intersectional approach is ‘a lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other’.⁵⁵ Conversely, intersectionality also highlights the intersection of multiple forms of power and privilege. An intersectional approach is critical for preventing violence against women because patriarchal power structures always intersect with other systems of power. Violence against women occurs in the context of both gender inequality and multiple other forms of structural and systemic inequality, oppression and discrimination. All of these intersect to influence the perpetration of violence, the prevalence, nature and dynamics of violence, and women’s experiences of violence. Understanding and addressing these intersections is necessary to effectively address the drivers of violence against women and prevent this violence across the population.

Intimate partner violence – any behaviour by someone within an intimate relationship (including current or past marriages, domestic partnerships, familial relations, people who share accommodation, and dating relationships) that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm to those in the

relationship. This is the most common form of family and domestic violence and the most common form of violence against women.

Leaders – anyone within the TAFE with formal responsibility for leading groups of people and the power to influence them. Leaders can be from all levels and all areas of the TAFE. Some TAFEs may find separating out the types of leaders across their TAFE beneficial when conducting the self-assessment and developing their actions plan.

Patriarchy – a social structure where the ideas, needs and actions of men are dominant over those of women (and non-binary people) and where men (as a group) hold social, political, cultural and economic power. Patriarchy is associated with a set of ideas that seek to explain and justify this dominance and attribute it to innate differences between men and women.

Sexism – discrimination based on gender, and the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that promote this discrimination.

Sexual harassment – an unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where a reasonable person would anticipate that reaction in the circumstances.⁵⁶

Sexual violence – sexual activity that happens where consent is not obtained or freely given. It occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity, such as touching, sexual harassment and intimidation, forced marriage, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual assault, and rape. Sexual assault is only one type of sexual violence and does not include sexual harassment, or broader and complex forms of sexual violence, such as technology-facilitated or image-based abuse.

Social norms – the informal, mostly unwritten and unspoken collective rules that define typical, acceptable, appropriate and obligatory actions in a social group, setting or society. They are produced and reproduced

by customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time to uphold particular forms of social order.

Structural discrimination and

disadvantage – a condition produced when the norms, policies and systems that operate within society create patterns that see people in particular groups more likely to experience discrimination and are more likely to be disadvantaged compared to others.

Violence against women – any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life. This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience (including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial, and others) that are gender based.

‘Whole-of’ approach – a ‘whole-of’ approach to prevention means that your strategy aims to engage everyone in the population, community or organisation. For TAFE this means working with and across the entire TAFE population. This includes TAFE boards, directors, executives, senior managers, Human Resources, educators, students, etc. A ‘whole-of’ approach recognises that change is complex and requires actions to embed prevention across all areas of an organisation.

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