

Gender-based Violence (University Members) Response Procedure

1 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to set out a process for the University's response to Gender-based Violence by University Members, in compliance with the national standards for responding to Gender-based Violence set out in the *National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025*.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to Gender-based Violence Disclosures and Complaints about University Members, including:

- Employees;
- contractors and subcontractors;
- visiting academics; and
- volunteers (including adjunct and honorary titleholders).

Gender-based Violence Disclosures and Complaints about Students are managed by the Safer Communities team in accordance with the Student Discrimination, Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Response Procedure and Student General Misconduct Procedure, respectively.

3 Procedure Overview

This procedure outlines the process to be followed when assessing and responding to Gender-based Violence Complaints and Disclosures about University Members.

4 Procedures

4.1 Key Definitions

National Gender-based Violence Code	The <i>National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025</i> established national standards for the University's response to Gender-based
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	Violence.
Gender-based Violence	Gender-based Violence is any form of physical or non-physical violence, harassment, abuse or threats, based on gender, that results in, or is likely to result in, harm, coercion, control, fear or deprivation of liberty or autonomy. Gender-based Violence includes but is not limited to: • sexual harassment; • sexual violence; • family and intimate partner violence; • technology-facilitated abuse (such as sharing intimate images without consent); • stalking and harassment; • coercive control (i.e., abusive patterns of behaviours to exert power and dominance over time, that create fear and deny a person liberty and autonomy); and • modern slavery or human trafficking. Gender-based Violence may occur as a single incident, as multiple incidents, or as a pattern of behaviour over time. Gender-based Violence can also occur alongside other forms of discrimination, abuse or violence, such as racism or ableism.
Discloser	A Discloser is a person who has experienced Gender-based Violence and has chosen to share information about their experience with another person or with the University.
Third-party Reporter	A Third-party Reporter is a person who witnessed or is otherwise aware of Gender-based Violence, but did not experience it themselves, and has chosen to share information about the Gender-based Violence with the University.
Gender-based Violence Disclosure	A Gender-based Violence Disclosure is made if either the Discloser (the person who experienced the Gender-based Violence) or another person (a Third-party Reporter) provides the University with information about the Gender-based

	Violence. A Gender-based Violence Disclosure may be managed as a Gender-based Violence Complaint if the matter is reported by the Discloser (the person who experienced the Gender-based Violence) through formal reporting pathways (as set out in section 4.2.2 below).
Gender-based Violence Complaint	A Gender-based Violence Complaint is made if the Discloser: • provides the University with information about their experience of Gender-based Violence through formal reporting pathways (as set out in section 4.2.2 below); and • requires the University to consider taking steps beyond the offer and provision of support services, including (without limitation) the commencement of an investigation and/or a disciplinary process in appropriate circumstances. Only a Discloser (the person who experienced the Gender-based Violence) can make a Gender-based Violence Complaint (i.e., another person cannot make a Gender-based Violence Complaint on the Discloser's behalf). A Discloser who makes a Gender-based Violence Complaint, is referred to as a Complainant.
Respondent	A Respondent is the person whose conduct is alleged to be Gender-based Violence. This Procedure applies only to Respondents who are University Members.
Case Manager	The Employee responsible for the assessment and management of a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint.
Support Officer	An Employee responsible for providing or facilitating access to support services, undertaking risk assessments, and developing tailored support plans in response to a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint.

4.2 Making a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint

4.2.1 Gender-based Violence Disclosure

Any person may make a Gender-based Violence Disclosure, including the Discloser or third party Reporters such as bystanders and witnesses who wish to provide information about Gender-based Violence incidents.

A Discloser may share information about their experience of Gender-based Violence with any person.

If the Discloser has shared information about their experience of Gender-based Violence with another person, that person may make a further Gender-based Violence Disclosure for the purpose of seeking support for the Discloser. It is recommended that the Discloser discuss their wishes in this regard with the person with whom they have shared their experience.

Gender-based Violence Disclosures can be made to any person, including to:

- the Discloser's colleague;
- the Discloser's supervisor;
- a fellow Student;
- a member of the Human Resources Partnerships team; or
- a member of the Safer Communities team, etc.

Gender-based Violence Disclosures can be made anonymously.

A Gender-based Violence Disclosure reported by the Discloser through formal reporting pathways (as set out in section 4.2.2 below), may be managed as a Gender-based Violence Complaint and may be investigated in accordance with the Employee Complaints Policy, Enterprise Agreement, or applicable executive employment contract, as appropriate.

The University will consider the wishes of the Discloser before making a decision to investigate a Gender-based Violence Disclosure.

4.2.2 Gender-based Violence Complaint

A Complainant can make a Gender-based Violence Complaint through any of the formal reporting pathways set out below:

In-person	Complainants can make a Gender-based Violence Complaint in-person to a member of the Workplace Relations team, at any of the University's campuses.
By video call	Complainants can make a Gender-based Violence Complaint by video call

	with a member of the Workplace Relations team. Video calls via Microsoft Teams and Zoom are supported.	
By online form	Complainants can submit a Gender-based Violence Complaint to the Workplace Relations team, by completing the online Complaints Form .	Complainants can submit an anonymous Gender-based Violence Complaint to the University's whistleblowing service, by completing the online Your Call Report Form . Complaints submitted to Your Call will be referred to the appropriate Nominated Officer for management.
By email	Complainants can submit a Gender-based Violence Complaint by email to the Workplace Relations team at Workplace.Relations@unisq.edu.au .	Complainants can submit a Gender-based Violence Complaint by email to the Chief People Officer at ChiefPeopleOfficer@unisq.edu.au .
By phone	Complainants can make a Gender-based Violence Complaint over the phone to a member of the Workplace Relations team by calling (07) 4631 1417 or (07) 3470 4447.	Complainants can make a Gender-based Violence Complaint over the phone to the University's whistleblowing service, by calling the Your Call hotline on 1300 790 288 between 07:00am and midnight (AEST), Monday to Friday (within Australia).
By mail	Complainants can make a Complaint by mail to: Chief People Officer Human Resources S-Block, Level 4 University of Southern Queensland Darling Heights, QLD, 4350	

The Workplace Relations team is available from 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday. Appointments can be made by email to Workplace.Relations@unisq.edu.au.

4.3 Assessing a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint

Upon receiving a disclosure or complaint about the conduct of a University Member, the Chief People Officer (or their nominee) will appoint a Case Manager with the necessary skills and experience to assess and manage the matter.

The Case Manager will undertake an assessment of the disclosure or complaint and will provide the Chief People Officer (or their nominee) with their recommendation for managing the matter as soon as practicable.

4.3.1 Gender-based Violence Assessment

The Case Manager will assess the matter against the definition of Gender-based Violence to determine whether the disclosure or complaint constitutes a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or a Gender-based Violence Complaint.

Gender-based Violence Disclosures or Complaints will be managed in accordance with this procedure. If a disclosure or complaint does not meet the definition of Gender-based Violence, the Chief People Officer (or their nominee) may determine that the matter should be managed in accordance with another Policy Instrument, in which case, this procedure will cease to apply.

4.3.2 Public Interest Disclosure and Corrupt Conduct Assessments

The Case Manager, in consultation with the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator, will assess the Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Public Interest Disclosure Procedure, to determine whether a Public Interest Disclosure has been made.

The Case Manager, in consultation with the Crime and Corruption Commission Liaison Officer, will also assess the Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint against the definition of Corrupt Conduct in the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001* (Qld), in accordance with the Corrupt Conduct Reporting Policy and Corrupt Conduct Resolution Procedure. The University must notify the Crime and Corruption Commission of any Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint that gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of Corrupt Conduct, and may be required to refer the Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint to the Queensland Police Service.

4.3.3 Risk Assessments

If a disclosure or complaint is assessed as being a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint (see section 4.3.1 above), the Chief People Officer (or their nominee) will assign Support Officers with the relevant expertise and knowledge of Gender-based Violence to undertake risk assessments for the Discloser and Respondent, based on the information available at the time. Separate Support Officers will be assigned to the Discloser and the Respondent.

If the Discloser is known to the University, a Support Officer may contact the Discloser for further information to appropriately assess the risks involved in the Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint.

University Members (including supervisors) who receive a Gender-based Violence Disclosure, are required to seek support from Human Resources to ensure the appropriate risk assessments are undertaken by Employees with the relevant expertise and knowledge of Gender-based Violence.

4.3.4 Safety and Support

Support Officers will provide or facilitate access to support services to persons making Gender-

based Violence Disclosures and/or Gender-based Violence Complaints, and to Respondents, and will provide the parties with information about the support services available to them.

Risk assessments will inform the support and control measures required to ensure the safety of Disclosers and Respondents.

Support Officers will develop tailored support plans in consultation with the Discloser and the Respondent, and will seriously consider the views of the Discloser when developing their tailored support plan.

4.4 Managing a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint

If a disclosure or complaint is assessed as being a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint (see section 4.3.1 above), the Chief People Officer (or their nominee) will consider the information available at the time and will determine the appropriate process for managing the Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint.

4.4.1 Gender-based Violence Disclosure

The University may manage Gender-based Violence Disclosures in a number of ways, including through:

- the provision of information, informal advice, and support;
- a resolution that is implemented with the agreement of the Discloser and Respondent;
- the implementation of safety measures without commencing an investigation;
- a decision to commence an investigation (if it is necessary for the safety and wellbeing of Students and University Members);
- a decision not to commence an investigation in the circumstances.

The University may investigate Gender-based Violence Disclosures if it is necessary for the safety and wellbeing of Students and/or University Members. The University will seek and consider the Discloser's views before commencing an investigation into a Gender-based Violence Disclosure.

The Chief People Officer (or their nominee) will have regard to the wishes of the Discloser when determining the process by which a Gender-based Violence Disclosure is managed.

The Case Manager will provide the Discloser and Respondent with written notice when an investigation is commenced into a Gender-based Violence Disclosure.

4.4.2 Gender-based Violence Complaint

The University will investigate Gender-based Violence Complaints against University Members.

Gender-based Violence Complaints against Employees will be investigated in accordance with this procedure and with the Employee Complaints Policy, or in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement or the provision of an executive employment contract, as applicable.

The Case Manager will provide the Discloser and Respondent with written notice when an investigation is commenced into a Gender-based Violence Complaint.

Following the outcome of an investigation, and depending on the circumstances, the University may:

- take Disciplinary Action against an Employee found to have engaged in Misconduct or Serious Misconduct, up to and including the termination of their employment for Serious Misconduct;
- take reasonable management action against an Employee found to have engaged in Gender-based Violence, including lawful and reasonable directives with respect to the Employee's working arrangements and/or development and training;
- cease the engagement of a contractor or volunteer (including adjunct and honorary titleholders) found to have engaged in Gender-based Violence;
- implement safety measures to eliminate or mitigate the risk to the Discloser and/or Respondent, as far as is practicable; and/or
- take no further action.

The Discloser and Respondent may be accompanied by a support person during any meeting or interview in relation to the Gender-based Violence Complaint, to ensure they feel comfortable to participate in an inclusive and culturally safe environment, and to give consideration to all intersecting factors of their identity and experience.

Gender-based Violence Complaints must be finalised within 45 business days from the date on which such a Complaint is made through any of the formal reporting pathways set out in section 4.2.2 above. An extension of this timeframe may be granted by the Chief People Officer, if they are satisfied that an extension is required in the circumstances.

The Case Manager will provide the Discloser and Respondent with updates throughout the Gender-based Violence Complaint management process, including if an extension is required to finalise the investigation.

The Case Manager will provide the Discloser and Respondent with written notice of the outcome of the investigation process, including reasons for the outcome. A Discloser may

request the Case Manager not to provide them with notice of the outcome.

The Respondent will be provided with procedural fairness throughout the investigation process and in any decisions which affect them.

4.5 Confidentiality

During any investigation of a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint, Disclosers, Respondents, and other persons (such as witnesses) involved in a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint are required to maintain the confidentiality of the matter, including any associated materials and information, as set out in this procedure or as advised by the Chief People Officer (or their nominee) and/or the Case Manager, for the purpose of maintaining the integrity of the process.

This obligation does not prevent Disclosers or Respondents, or any person involved in an investigation of a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint, from seeking professional advice or support (for example, from an industrial or legal representative, or counsellor).

4.6 Delegations

The Vice-Chancellor and President, as the Principal Executive Officer under the National Gender-based Violence Code, is responsible for ensuring the University complies with the standards for preventing and responding to Gender-based Violence, as set out in the National Gender-based Violence Code.

To enable the University's response to Gender-based Violence Complaints, including the investigation of such Complaints, in a timely and efficient manner, the Vice-Chancellor and President has delegated their power to grant extensions of time under Standards 5.17 and 5.27 of the National Gender-based Violence Code, to the Chief People Officer.

The Chief People Officer will notify the Vice-Chancellor and President if an extension of time has been granted under these Standards, and the reasons why the extension was required.

4.7 Data Collection and Reporting

The University is required to periodically report to the Department of Education on how it has complied with its obligations under the National Gender-based Violence Code, which includes reporting on its response to Gender-based Violence.

The University is required to collect and report de-identified and aggregated data on Gender-based Violence incidents and demographic data of Disclosers and Respondents, to enable trend analysis and the systemic improvement of responses to Gender-based Violence across the University and the Australian higher education sector more broadly.

Disclosers and Respondents are not required to provide the University with their demographic data.

The University will collect, manage, use, and disclose demographic data (which is Personal Information) in line with the requirements of the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) and the Privacy Policy.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Chief People Officer
Responsible Officer	Director (Workplace Relations and Operations)
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Employee Complaints Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	25/8/2026
Effective Date	25/8/2026
Review Date	25/8/2031
Relevant Legislation	Universities Accord (National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence) Act 2025 National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	Code of Conduct Policy Corrupt Conduct Reporting Policy Employee Complaints Policy Prevention of Discrimination, Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy

	Public Interest Disclosure Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
Related Procedures	Corrupt Conduct Resolution Procedure Employee Complaints (Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault and Sex Discrimination) Procedure Employee Complaints Procedure Modern Slavery Prevention Procedure Public Interest Disclosure Procedure Work Health and Safety Risk Management Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	Forms Your Call Report Form Online Complaint Form Online Disclosure Form Websites and publications Your Call Service and FAQs Gender-based Violence and Higher Education The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022 - 2023 The National Principles to Address Coercive Control in Family and Domestic Violence Technology-facilitated Abuse: Family, Domestic, and Sexual Violence Modern Slavery in Australia
Definitions	Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary Corrupt Conduct Defined in section 15 of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 . Disciplinary Action

Action by the University to discipline an Employee for misconduct or serious misconduct and includes: formal censure or counselling; demotion by one or more classification levels or increments; withholding of an increment; suspension with or without pay; or termination of employment for serious misconduct only.

[Employee](#)

A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University.

[Enterprise Agreement](#)

University of Southern Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2023-2026.

[Personal Information](#)

Personal information means information or an opinion about an identified individual or an individual who is reasonably identifiable from the information or opinion - (a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.

[Policy Instrument](#)

A Policy Instrument refers to an instrument that is governed by the Policy framework. These include Policies, Procedures and Schedules.

[Public Interest Disclosure](#)

A public interest disclosure is a disclosure under Chapter 2 of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 and includes all information and help given by the discloser to a Proper Authority for the disclosure.

[Student](#)

A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

[University](#)

The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.

[University Members](#)

Persons who include: Employees of the University whose conditions of employment are covered by the UniSQ Enterprise Agreement whether full time or fractional, continuing, fixed-term or casual, including senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University; members of the University Council and University Committees; visiting, honorary and adjunct appointees; volunteers who contribute to University activities or who act on behalf of the University; and individuals who are granted access to University facilities or who are engaged in providing services to the University, such as contractors or consultants, where applicable.

[Vice-Chancellor](#)

The person bearing the title of Vice-Chancellor and President, or as otherwise defined in the University of Southern Queensland Act 1998 , including a person acting in that position.

Definitions that relate to this procedure only

Case Manager

The Employee responsible for the assessment and management of a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint.

Discloser

A Discloser is a person who has experienced Gender-based Violence and has chosen to share information about their experience with another person or with the University.

Gender-based Violence

Gender-based Violence is any form of physical or non-physical violence, harassment, abuse or threats, based on gender, that results in, or is likely to result in, harm, coercion, control, fear or deprivation of liberty or autonomy.

Gender-based Violence Complaint

A Gender-based Violence Complaint is made if the Discloser:

- provides the University with information about their experience

	of Gender-based Violence through formal reporting pathways; and • requires the University to consider taking steps beyond the offer and provision of support services, including (without limitation) the commencement of an investigation and/or a disciplinary process in appropriate circumstances. Gender-based Violence Disclosure A Gender-based Violence Disclosure is made if either the Discloser or another person provides the University with information about the Discloser's experience of Gender-based Violence. National Gender-based Violence Code The <i>National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025</i> established national standards for the University's response to Gender-based Violence. Respondent A Respondent is the person whose conduct is alleged to be Gender-based Violence. Support Officer An Employee responsible for providing or facilitating access to support services, undertaking risk assessments, and developing tailored support plans in response to a Gender-based Violence Disclosure or Complaint. Third-party Reporter A Third-party Reporter is a person who witnessed or is otherwise aware of Gender-based Violence, but did not experience it themselves, and has chosen to share information about the Gender-based Violence with the University.
Keywords	
Record No	26/388PL