Policy Explainer:

How Deakin responds to gender-based violence

Read the full version here:
Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Policy

What is this explainer for?

To help students and staff understand what Deakin's Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Policy says about **how Deakin will respond to gender-based violence** and what this means for you.

What is 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 of the deprivation of liberty' (National Code 2025)*.

This means violence that is more likely to affect women and gender-diverse people or is caused by gender inequality. Violence can come from a partner, a family member or someone you don't know. It can happen to anyone, of any gender or identity. It can include:

- Physical violence – hurting someone physically or threatening to
- Sexual violence – like sexual harassment or sexual assault (sexual touching without consent)
- Psychological – gaslighting, name calling, verbal abuse, and coercive control
- Financial forms of violence – like limiting or controlling access to money, work or study.

What is the gender-based violence policy and how do you use it?

The Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Policy explains how Deakin will respond when gender-based violence occurs. The Gender-based Violence Response Procedure provides extra details.

You can use the policy to understand your options, your rights, and what happens when you disclose or report gender-based violence. If any of it doesn't make sense to you, you can ask Safer Community or the conduct and complaints teams to explain it.

What does the policy say?

1. Gender-based violence is not acceptable

At Deakin, we don't accept Gender-based violence. We are trying hard to stop violence and to support people who need it, no matter where violence occurs.

If a student or staff member uses gender-based violence at Deakin, it may be a breach of the Student Code of Conduct or Staff Code of Conduct. This can result in Deakin taking action to prevent more harm, like education programs, or suspending or expelling someone.

2. There is help available if you experience gender-based violence

If you are harmed by gender-based violence, or know someone who has been, you can get support.

- You can make a **disclosure:** when you share information about gender-based violence to get

support for you or someone else; or
- You can make a **report or complaint** - a formal way of asking the University to take action about gender-based violence. It is usually made by a person who experienced violence.

We will support anyone affected by gender-based violence, wherever it happens. We will:
- consider the effect on you and won't cause more harm
- focus on your needs and choices (or of the person you are supporting)
- respect your rights and treat you with dignity
- help remove barriers to getting help, by working with interpreters or the National Relay Service, and helping you connect with specialist support.

Safer Community is Deakin's main service for people who need help because of gender-based violence or behaviour they are worried about. You don't have to make a report or complaint to get help - Safer Community will support you either way.

3. You can make a report or complaint to Deakin about gender-based violence

Detailed information about reporting gender-based violence can be found in the Gender-Based Violence Response Procedure, or in our reporting process maps on the gender-based violence prevention and response website. If you want to report someone, the options are listed below.

For students:
- If you are a student and you want to report another student's behaviour: Student Conduct
- If you are a student and you want to report a staff member's behaviour: Student Complaints

For staff:
- If you are a staff member and you want to report a student's behaviour: Student Conduct
- If you are a staff member and you want to report a staff member's behaviour, you can report to Equity and Inclusion via an online form or via email eeo@deakin.edu.au.

When you make a report or complaint to Deakin, we will investigate and make a finding about whether the reported behaviour happened, and whether it breached the code of conduct (this may sometimes be with the help of an external investigator).

When a finding is made, we will make a decision on what needs to happen next, including consequences for a person who has breached the code of conduct.

4. Other important information

Anonymous reporting: You can report gender-based violence anonymously (without sharing your name or details, or the names and details of others involved) but this may limit how Deakin can help.

Police and criminal investigations: Deakin can investigate whether someone has broken the Student Code of Conduct or Staff Code of Conduct, but not whether a crime happened. If you believe a crime has happened, Safer Community can help you to report it to police.

Agreements with Deakin: Unless the person who made the complaint asks for it, Deakin **can't** make you sign an agreement that says
- you agree to keep what happened a secret (non-disclosure clauses)
- you won't say negative things about what happened (non-disparagement clauses).

You are protected if you tell Deakin about gender-based violence: You cannot be punished, treated unfairly, or harassed because you report gender-based violence, provide information about something that happened, or support someone who has experienced gender-based violence.

What support is available?

In an emergency:

- You can contact **000** in an emergency or crisis.
- You can also contact Deakin Security: 1800 062 579
- 1800RESPECT is a 24hour crisis service for family and sexual violence (1800 737 732)

Additional support options:

Safer Community: 9am - 4pm, Monday – Friday

- Phone: 03 9244 3734
- Complete the online form
- Email: safercommunity@deakin.edu.au

If you experience, witness, or have information about gender-based violence, you can contact Safer Community for support and advice. They will:

- Discuss options: focusing on your needs and what you want
- Coordinate support: like academic support, leave (for staff), and access to other Deakin and external support services
- Follow University procedures: they will assess risks and make plans to help you be safe.
- Assist you to make a report or complaint: if you decide you want to.

Deakin Support Services

- Deakin Residential Services: 24/7 support for residents on campus
- Harassment and Discrimination Contact Officers
- Student Counselling
- Employee Wellbeing Support (EWS)
- Deakin Security: 1800 062 579

Gender-based violence services

- 1800RESPECT: (gender-based violence support, including support for people with disability and multilingual communities): 1800 737 732
- Safe Steps (family violence response centre): 1800 015 188 (24/7)
- Sexual Assault Crisis Line call 1800 806 292 (24/7)

Tailored Gender-based Violence Services

- Djirra: practical family violence support for Aboriginal people.
- InTouch: family violence support for migrant communities and those on temporary visas.
- Men's Referral Service: support for men who use violence and referral to health and counselling support.
- Switchboard: peer-driven support services for LGBTQIA+ people, their families, allies and communities.
- Child Protection: for child safety matters.

24/7 Australian Crisis and CounsellingServices

- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- BeyondBlue: 1300 224 636 - information and support for anxiety, depression and suicide prevention.
- Headspace and Headspace Online Telephone Support