Drivers of Gender-Based Violence

Sexual harassment and gender-based violence is not just an individual problem, it is a systemic one. To prevent gender-based violence it is important to understand its drivers and the spectrum of behaviours that may constitute gender-based violence, including micro-agressions. At Griffith, we recognise that gender-based inequalities are drivers of gender-based violence. The University is committed to addressing gender-based power imbalances that perpetuate and compound rigid gender norms and gender-based discrimination. Drivers are those that:

- enable sexual harassment to occur in different work contexts

- influence whether victim-survivors report sexual harm

- influence how people respond to sexual harm

Key drivers that can increase the risk of sexual harassment, assault and gender-based violence occurring in a workplace include:

1. Gender inequality

2. Beliefs that embed gender inequality and enable sexual harassment

3. Marginalisation from intersecting identities and other inequalities

4. Workplace characteristics that produce risk, including

    a. Workplace features

    b. Workplace environments

    c. Workplace composition

    d. Workplace trends

    e. Workplace requirements

Identified Drivers:

Within the context of Griffith University the following are identified drivers that could enable sexual harassment, assault or gender-based violence to occur, influence the reporting of occurrences and influence how people respond to occurrences. This list of drivers is not exhaustive but aims to be representative of those drivers that may exist across both student and staff cohorts.

- Excusing and not addressing threatening and intimidating behaviour in the University

- Ignoring small acts of disrespect and inequality

- Reports of sexual harassment or inappropriate behaviours are not taken seriously

- Gender underrepresentation in leadership and on decision-making bodies such as committees

- Having unclear standards, expectations and consequences for inappropriate, disrespectful and uncivil behaviours

- Having gendered stereotypes about what genders perform what roles in the University

- Having gendered stereotypes about what genders participate in what courses as students.

- Where there is low worker or stakeholder diversity (for example workforce is dominated by one gender)

- Power imbalances between individuals, teams or work areas

- Environments or work areas with a misogynist culture

- Work areas with a high-level of contact with third parties, including customers, clients or patients

- Individuals, teams or work areas that are isolated or remote

- Cohorts within the University that are employed casually, or on short-term contracts

- Having inequity in the processes and expectations applied to different cohorts (ie students and staff)

- University structures that are organised according to a hierarchical structure

- Role requirements where travel and overnight stays are required

- Situations where there is an expectation to attend events where alcohol or other impairing substances are available

Addressing drivers

Griffith University has undertaken many actions in addressing the drivers of sexual harassment, assault and gender-based violence. The following are the key organisational level implemented controls:

Plans & Reporting:

- First Peoples Employment Action Plan

- Reconciliation Statement

- Griffith Athena SWAN Action Plan

- Pride Plan

- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

- Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012) reporting

- University Council Reporting on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- Safe and Respectful Communities Action Plan (annual)

- Safe Campuses Annual Report

Partnerships & Governance:

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

- Griffith University Elders and First Peoples Knowledge Holders Advisory Board

- Reconciliation Statement Steering Committee

- First Peoples Employment Committee

- Athena SWAN Committee

- Disability Advisory Committee

- Pride Committee

- Group Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committees

- Safe and Respectful Communities Expert Reference Group

- Disrupting Violence Beacon

- Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

- Griffith University Health Safety and Wellbeing Committees

Policies & Standards:

- Code of Conduct

- Student Conduct Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- Sexual Harm Prevention and Response Policy

- Staff Sexual Harm Response Procedure

- Student General Conduct Procedure

- Student Reports of Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Harm Procedure

- Staff Harassment Bullying and Discrimination Policy

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- Equity Diversity and Inclusion Policy

- Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- Demonstrating Health, Safety and Wellbeing Leadership Standard

- Managing Psychosocial Hazards and Risks Standard

Reporting Mechanisms and Support:

- Reporting - Report a Concern reporting mechanism (option for anonymous reporting)

- Centralised specialist support teams – Health & Wellbeing (staff), Student Safety and Wellbeing, Counselling and Wellbeing, Student Associations and Advocacy

Training:

- Code of Conduct staff training (mandatory)

- Preventing and responding to Gender-based violence staff training (mandatory from 2025)

- Manager Essentials – Workplace Relations online course – positive duty case study

- LGBTIQ+ inclusion training

- How to be an LGBTIQ+ Ally (self-paced, online) available to employees and students

- How to be a Trans Ally (self-paced, online) available to employees and students

- Disability Inclusion training

- Cultural Competency (online training and face to face workshops)

- Respectful relationships and consent (GU Accommodation workshops)

- Recognise, Respond, Refer student training

- Respect at Griffith training (2025)

- Psychosocial Risk Management for People Leaders training