



Australian Government
Department of Education

Welcome

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION CODE TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

WEBINAR: Standard 1 - Accountable Leadership and Governance



Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and Elders past and present.

We extend our respects to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with us today.



Victim-survivor acknowledgement

We acknowledge the strength, courage and resilience of those who have experienced gender-based violence.

Their lived experiences and advocacy have been instrumental in shaping the National Code.

We also recognise the commitment of advocates, practitioners and community members who have stood alongside victim survivors, amplifying their stories and driving change.



Agenda

- Standard 1 overview
- Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan
- Guidance to Develop a Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan and Outcomes Framework
- Next Steps
- Q&A



Standard 1: Accountable leadership and governance

Leadership is the cornerstone of cultural transformation needed in higher education institutions, to drive systemic and whole-of-organisation efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

Accountable leadership

- The Higher Education Principal Executive Officer:
 - Is accountable for compliance with the National Code (Standard 1.1)
 - Leads the development, implementation, publication, and continuous review of the Plan and Outcomes Framework (Standard 1.4 & 1.10)



Standard 1: Accountable leadership and governance

Governance

- Providers need to include someone with experience and expertise in student and staff safety and wellbeing within the membership of their governing body
or
- ensure there is a subcommittee reporting directly to the governing body that has delegated responsibility for student and staff safety and wellbeing (Standard 1.2).

Providers provide de-identified information and undertake obligations under the National Code in accordance with applicable Privacy Laws (Standard 1.3).



Whole-of- organisation approach

- a) leadership, culture and environment
- b) structures, norms and practices
- c) systems and infrastructure
- d) services delivery, such as curriculum, teaching and learning
- e) policy and procedures
- f) management and governance
- g) community engagement
- h) business
- i) research; and
- j) partnerships



Whole-of-Organisation Prevention and Response Plan and Outcomes Framework

Providers, led by their Principal Executive Officer, must:

- Prepare, implement and publish a Whole-of-Organisation Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Plan (Standard 1.4)
- Develop an Outcomes Framework to track and assess effectiveness and progress of actions under the Plan (Standard 1.7)

Providers that directly own, operate and/or manages student accommodation must ensure that their Plans addresses how it will comply with its obligations under the National Code in student accommodation (Standard 1.6)

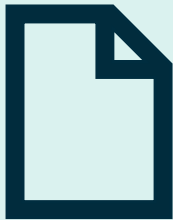


Guidance to develop a Plan and Outcomes Framework

- Providers need to submit a single Plan and an Outcome Framework
- Providers are required include the endorsement template with the submission of their Plan
- Using the plan template and preparation worksheets is optional

Available resources to support providers compliance:

Guidance



Endorsement
template



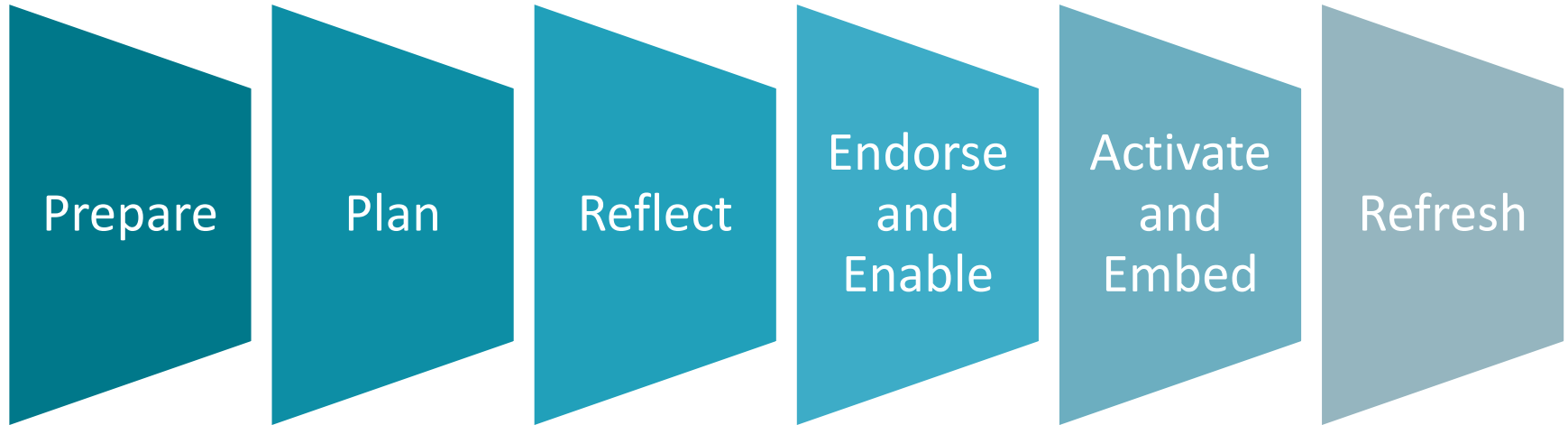
Plan templates
(optional)



Preparation worksheets
(optional)



Steps to develop a Plan and Outcomes Framework



Step 1

Prepare

This step is about identifying:

- Who needs to be involved in the development of the Plan
- What is needed within the providers organisation to meet the requirements of the National Code

Use this opportunity to:

- Consider what can be built on or improved
 - Highlight key gaps
 - Formulate how to champion the work to prevent and respond to gender-based violence across the organisation
 - Consider the level of commitment required and use the Plan to drive culture, capability, systems, processes, data and evidence
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Step 1

Prepare

Grouping requirements:

- **Engagement** - Standard 1.4(h) and (i).
- **Data Analysis & Evidence Review** – Standard 1.4(j), (k) & (l).
- **Systemic Risks, Enablers & Barriers** – Standard 1.4(e), (f) and Standard 6.3.
- **Implementation of National Code Requirements** –Standard 1.4(d).
 - This is the opportunity to cross-reference any overlap among actions that emerge in the Prepare step with a provider's existing approaches and plans to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and promote gender equality.



Step 2 Plan

The plan must:

- Detail the provider's approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence.
- Address the factors that drive and contribute to gender-based violence.
- Reflect the needs, experience and diversity of members of the community.
- Document how providers will meet the national Code requirements.

Providers are required to develop an outcomes framework to track and measure the effectiveness of the Plan's actions - Standard 1.7.



Step 2 - Plan

Gender Equality Action Plan

To meet the requirements of the National Code, providers can use their existing Gender Equality Action Plans and, either:

- expand them to include actions for students and the broader provider community;
- or
- incorporate actions to promote gender equality for the broader community into their consolidated Plan.



Step 3 - Reflect

Points for reflection:

- Does the Plan outline how change will be achieved and how will it meet requirements under the National Code?
- Are diverse perspectives and needs captured?
- Is the organisation implementation-ready?
- Are resources, systems, and stakeholder supports in place?
- Are key barriers being addressed?

Actions include:

- Assessing resource availability.
 - Establishing supporting systems and processes.
 - Engaging stakeholders and securing commitment.
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Step 4 - Endorse and Enable

- Leadership and endorsement signal strong commitment to preventing and responding to gender-based violence and reinforce the need for systemic change
- Table A and B providers must submit a single Plan and Outcomes Framework, which has been **developed and attested to by their Higher Education Principal Executive Officer and endorsed by their governing body**
- This aims to strengthen transparency and accountability and signal an organisational commitment to systemic change.
- Regardless of the format, the Department requires providers to submit the completed endorsement template alongside their Plan.



Step 5 - Activate and Embed

Moving beyond endorsement

Providers must implement their Plan, monitor progress and embed it into everyday practice (Standard 1.4 and Standard 1.7):

- Communicating the Plan's purpose and requirements.
- Monitoring and mitigating gender-based violence risks.
- Integrating actions into systems, policies, and procedures.
- Providing ongoing training and support.

Providers may be required to provide data on student and staff awareness of:

- The Plan.
 - Policies and procedures for making disclosures and formal reports.
 - Availability and accessibility of support services, including academic adjustments, in relation to gender-based violence.
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Step 6 - Refresh

Requirements:

- **Reporting to the provider's governing body** against the Plan & Outcomes Framework, every 6 months. (Standard 1.9). This report must include de-identified data, including identification of any trends.
- **Reporting to the Department** on the Plan and Outcomes Framework by the initial reporting date and every 2 years thereafter (Standard 1.10)
 - Must include a systemic review and analysis.
 - Must be informed by the Provider's analysis of data, as reported to the Secretary (Standard 6)
- **Engaging with the Department around feedback** (Standard 1.12)
- **Using data** collected under Standard 6 to strengthen prevention and response approach (Standard 1.8)
- **Submit** a Plan and Outcomes Framework every 4 years following from the initial reporting date (Standard 1.8)



What happens next?

The National Code comes into force on 1 January 2026, and with it, providers are required to meet their reporting obligations.

- For Table A and Table B providers the initial compliance date is **January 1, 2026**.
- For remaining providers registered with TEQSA it is **January 1, 2027**.

Table A and B providers **must submit a consolidated Plan and Outcomes Framework**, which has been developed and attested to by their Higher Education Principal Executive Officer and endorsed by their governing body, to the Department by Jan 1, 2026.



Key takeaways

- Ending gender-based violence in higher education requires strong, visible, and sustained leadership.
- A whole-of -organisation approach is fundamental to driving systemic change.
- Governing bodies have a vital role to play in endorsing this approach and monitoring its effectiveness over time
- Sector-wide accountable leadership and governance is essential to effectively embed prevention and response measures, and foster the cultural transformation necessary to minimise gender-based violence.



Q & A



Thank you

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