



Transcript

National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence **Standard 6 – Data, Evidence and Impact**

November 2025

The transcript of this (and all further webinars) webinars should be read with the *Universities Accord (National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence) Act 2025* (the Act) and the *National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025* (the National Code), which are the primary sources of requirements with which providers must comply. To the extent there is any inconsistency between the transcript of the webinar and the Act and the National Code, the Act and the National Code will prevail. The transcript of the webinar is intended to provide general guidance only and is not intended as, and should not be relied on, as legal advice. Providers should seek their own legal advice to understand their obligations under the Act and the National Code.

Presented by:

- Joanna Brislane - Director, Education and Engagement, Higher Education Gender-based Violence Regulator, Department of Education
- Kurt Carmichael - Director, Regulatory Operations Team, Higher Education Gender-based Violence Regulator, Department of Education

[Opening visual of slide with text saying, 'Australian Government with Crest (logo)', 'Department of Education', 'Welcome', 'National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence', 'WEBINAR: Standard 6 of the National Code – Data, evidence and impact']

[The visuals during this webinar are of each speaker presenting in turn via video, with reference to the content of a PowerPoint presentation being played on screen]

Jo Brislane:

Good afternoon, everyone and welcome to today's webinar on the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence with a focus on Standard 6, Data, Evidence and Impact. My name is Jo Brislane and I'm the Director of Education and Engagement in the Gender-Based Violence Reform Branch in the Department of Education. And I'm joined today by my colleague Kurt Carmichael, our Director of Regulatory Operations.

I'd like to thank those that have joined our previous webinars. This is the last in our current series introducing the requirements of the National Code. Recordings and transcripts of all webinars are being made available on our website as soon as practicable following the sessions and we'll post a link to these shortly.

I'm joining you today from the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation and I acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. I genuinely pay my respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who are joining us today.

As we begin, we honour the strength, courage and resilience of those who've experienced gender-based violence. Their lived experiences and tireless advocacy have been instrumental in shaping the National Code. Gender-based violence remains a serious and widespread issue in Australian society including within higher education. The National Code was established as a direct response to this reality, and it recognises that a key facet of preventing and responding to gender-based violence is data and evidence.

Today between myself and Kurt we'll aim to share about 20 minutes of content covering an overview of Standard 6, data collection and reporting principles, and key requirements for higher education providers relating to data collection and data reporting.

Finally, just a brief housekeeping point specific to today. We'll use some specific examples of data throughout the webinar however this should not be taken as an exhaustive list of all data that will need to be reported on under the National Code. The Department will issue further guidance which will include an exhaustive list of data which must be reported as part of the annual data reporting process. I'll now pass over to Kurt who'll give us an overview of Standard 6. Thanks Kurt.

Kurt Carmichael:

Thanks so much Jo and thanks everyone for joining us today. As many of you will know there's currently limited reliable and consistent national data on gender-based violence in higher education settings and this can really limit the effectiveness of prevention and response efforts both at the provider level but also at the Government policy making level.

Standard 6 of the National Code aims to strengthen data collection systems and expand the evidence on the incidence of gender-based violence within and across higher education providers and ensure that prevention and response efforts are data and evidence informed. Standard 6 outlines three different types of data which can be collected and reported on under the National Code. The first is process data which relates to the implementation of policies, procedures, plans and related activities. The second is deidentified data on incidents of gender-based violence. And the third is deidentified demographic data of disclosers and respondents including enrolment or employment characteristics.

The collection, sharing and use of this data serves multiple purposes. So, it will support the Department to monitor compliance and accountability of providers against the National Code. It will support providers to monitor the incidence of gender-based violence and inform continuous review and improvement of policies, processes and systems. It will support the Department and providers to evaluate the effectiveness of the sector in preventing and responding to gender-based violence and it will contribute to strengthening the national evidence base on gender-based violence in higher education settings informing policy development and evidence based decision making.

So, we'll now have a look at the principles underlying data collection and reporting.

I really want to reinforce the principles that underpin all aspects of the National Code. They've been touched on in past webinars but they're especially relevant to data collection and reporting. Data must be collected and reported in a manner that is trauma informed. So, this includes but isn't limited to minimising re-traumatisation, avoiding the need to make disclosures multiple times to multiple people, and ensuring safe and respectful data handling. It should also be person centred. So that includes but isn't limited to cultural sensitivity and accessibility, respecting individual preferences, empowerment and dignity. And finally, it must be privacy compliant. So, all data must be deidentified and comply with relevant privacy laws. Adherence to these base principles is critical to delivering the outcomes sought by the National Code as well as meeting all the existing legal obligations such as the Privacy Act.

I'll now talk about the annual data reporting requirements under the National Code. So Standard 6.12 requires providers to collect and report specific data on an annual basis. Reporting is to occur by the 30th of June for the previous calendar year. So, for Table A and B providers annual data collection obligations commence 1 January 2026 and the first data reporting is required by the 30th of June 2027. All other providers will follow one year behind this timeline. So, reporting obligations will commence from the 1st of January 2027 and the first annual reporting obligation by 30th of June 2028.

Before we get into detail about some of the specific reporting requirements I wanted to highlight that successful implementation of the National Code will raise awareness and improve provider policies, procedures and systems and this is expected to result in an increase in the number of incidents being reported in line with national benchmarks reported by other independent sources. This is an indicator of positive change. It indicates that gender-based violence is becoming less acceptable to society and that victim survivors are seeking help. We also expect a number of historical incidents to be reported as awareness increases and systems improve. We expect providers to be capturing and reporting these historic incidences. I'll now hand back to Jo to go over some of the more specifics on the data to be reported. Thanks Jo.

Jo Brislane:

Thanks Kurt. Standard 6.13 of the Code requires providers to collect and report deidentified disaggregated data on incidents of gender-based violence. Incidents include both disclosures and formal reports where either the discloser or respondent is a student or staff member of the higher education provider. For each incident reported the data elements that will need to be collected and reported to the Department include but are not limited to details about the incident itself such as the date or dates that it occurred, the type or types of incidents, the location or locations that incidents occurred, how the incident was reported and who reported the incident, details about the provider's response to the incident such as who is leading the response, for example a student

accommodation provider or a higher education provider, the types of safety measures put in place, the risk assessment undertaken and referrals to third party supports where relevant. And finally details of outcomes and resolutions such as investigative outcomes, disciplinary actions, appeals, the use of non-disclosure agreements, resolution timeframes and discloser satisfaction with the outcome.

The National Code provides a clear definition of gender-based violence however when it comes to data collection reporting we recognise that providers will need to exercise a degree of discretion. For example, the IT systems and processes currently used by providers may be designed to cover a much broader spectrum of issues capturing other safety concerns and forms of discrimination and they will need to determine which incidents to report against the National Code.

The Department will also include a standard list of categories in its guidance to the sector which should support providers in this endeavour. This list will not be exhaustive, and providers will need to exercise discretion as to what constitutes gender-based violence incidents on a case by case basis in alignment with the objectives of the Code.

We have received a number of questions on whether summary or disaggregated data is required. The National Code requires disaggregated or unit level data. Disaggregated data allows both providers and the Department as the regulator to undertake more detailed analysis to understand trends and identify and respond to systemic drivers of gender-based violence. It also provides the transparency and accountability required to monitor compliance with the National Code and will help drive data consistency, a critical step to undertaking more detailed policy analysis and informing evidence-based decision making. Noting privacy implications providers can remove identifying markers where they may reasonably lead to an individual being identified, for example where there is only a very small sample population or the discloser or respondent's combined demographic data are unique enough to result in identification.

With regards to the publication of data the Department may publish aggregated data for the purpose of measuring outcomes and trends over time. The National Code notes that the Secretary may require a provider to publish de-identifiable data to support the transparent progression towards meeting obligations under the Code. I'll now speak to the key demographic and descriptive details providers need to collect.

Standard 6.14 builds on Standard 6.13 to ensure that key demographic and descriptive details for both the discloser and respondent are captured and reported for each incident. This may include gender, age, sexual orientation, country of birth and citizenship, primary spoken language, Indigenous status, disability status, the mode, year and level of study if they are a student or the basis of employment if they are a staff member. Again, this data all needs to be provided to the Department in a deidentified, disaggregated format. Demographic and descriptive data will be valuable for both providers and the Department to evaluate the effectiveness of policies, identify trends and systemic barriers and support effective policy design. As we previously flagged the specific examples of data, I just highlighted are just a sample of what is required by the National Code, and I encourage relevant staff within institutions to familiarise themselves with the details of Standard 6.

I will now pass back to Kurt to cover off on other data reporting requirements.

Kurt Carmichael:

Thanks Jo. It's important to note that in addition to setting out annual reporting requirements Standard 6 also underpins requirements and obligations contained within other areas of the National Code. At any time, the Secretary may require a provider to provide data demonstrating its compliance to any obligations specified within the National Code. This is a flexible mechanism which can be used by the Secretary to progress priority matters and monitor ongoing compliance. So, for example, Standard 6.9 sets out that entities may be required to provide data on staff and student awareness of plans, policies, procedures and available supports relating to gender-based violence. Standard 6.10 sets out that entities may be required to provide data relating to declarations of allegations or determinations of gender-based violence through recruitment processes. And Standard 6.11 sets out that entities may be required to provide data in relation to training and training feedback as it relates to gender-based violence.

This highlights the importance of providers ensuring they have a comprehensive understanding of all their requirements under the National Code and maintaining accurate, up to date records to demonstrate their compliance.

As noted earlier in the session data collection and reporting guidance will be issued by the Department to provide additional information and help guide the consistent collection and reporting of data. We anticipate this will be available shortly. Guidance will include a detailed list of data elements to be captured including accepted response options such as the types of gender-based violence we mentioned in an earlier slide, and information regarding formatting of data for submission.

We recognise that providers are at different stages of maturity regarding their data collection policies, procedures and systems however all providers must be ready to demonstrate they are meeting their data and evidence obligations across the National Code including by working collaboratively with student accommodation providers.

So, this brings us to the end of the overview presentation for Standard 6 of the National Code. And I'll pass back to Jo.

Jo Brislane:

Thanks Kurt and thank you all very much for attending today's session and the other sessions across these last seven covering all the Standards of the Code, if you've been able to attend. We really see the higher education sector as a critical partner in this national effort to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and look forward to working alongside all of you to continuously build environments where safety is the norm, disclosure leads to support and every member of the community can flourish. Thank you all.

[Closing visual of slide with text saying, 'Thank you',
<https://www.education.gov.au/highereducationGBVcode>', image of QR code]

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