



Transcript

National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence

FAQs on Guidance on Collecting Annual Reporting Data

April 2026

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Presented by:

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[Opening visual of slide with text saying, 'Australian Government with Crest (logo)', 'Higher Education', 'Gender-based Violence Regulator', 'National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence', 'Webinar: FAQs on Guidance on collecting annual reporting data']

[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]

Michele Clark:

Welcome everybody and I hope your Wednesdays are treating you well. As we're in the middle of a short week I'm a bit thrown for what day it is. But hopefully your weeks are travelling well. So welcome to today's webinar. Today we'll be answering questions submitted to us following the release of the Guidance on Collecting Annual Reporting Data, a resource we developed to support the annual data reporting as required under the Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence.

For those of you who I haven't met my name is Michele Clark. So, I'm the Assistant Secretary of the Higher Education Gender-Based Violence Regulator within the Department of Education. I'm joined today by my colleague Kurt Carmichael, Director of Regulatory Operations.

So, before we get into the meat of today's webinar, I'd like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands of which I'm on today and the lands of which you're joining on today as well. I'm on beautiful Wurundjeri land of the Kulin nation in Melbourne and I pay my respects to Elders past and present. I acknowledge the continuing connection and custodianship of the land, waters and community on which we play, work and thrive.

I'd also like to honour the strength, courage and resilience of those who have experienced gender-based violence. Their lived experiences and tireless advocacy have been instrumental in shaping the National Code. Everyone deserves to live a life free from gender-based violence and the opportunity to reach their full potential in higher education. To those whose voices have inspired this change and continue to work to guide this work thank you for shaping a future where safety, equality and respect are the foundations of higher education.

So today we're going to share a brief overview of our Guidance on Collecting Annual Reporting Data which I'll now refer to as the Data Guidance to save the mouthful that it is, then proceed to focusing on answering the questions you've submitted. So, thank you to those of you who have submitted questions. It's been really insightful to us to understand what your key concerns are and some of the implementation challenges that you're facing. There's an opportunity as well to ask questions as we go through. So please continue to feed to us how you're going with the material and things that are cropping up to you as we walk through today.

So, the questions we've received have really fallen into three broad categories. There's reporting dates, submission requirements and format, so more of that kind of technical aspect. There's questions about the scope of the data reporting and there's questions about safety and privacy.

So as I said throughout the session you can submit additional questions. And Jo Brislane from my team will be acting as moderator for today and will throw questions to us as they come in so we can respond to as many as we possibly can in the time we have today. So for any questions raised today that haven't been answered we will look to getting you responses through either our frequently asked questions section on our website or through other methods we have. I don't know if we'll have all the answers to every question today but those that we don't have answers to we will take on notice and then come back to you with some considered thoughts if they're particularly curly questions.

The webinar today will be recorded. So we'll upload a transcript to the website as soon as possible after this session so it can be referred to as well as you continue to go through implementation of this quite complex area.

So now I'm going to pass to Kurt who will give an overview of the importance of data collection and the guidance that we've released recently. Thanks Kurt.

Kurt Carmichael:

Thanks so much Michele and thanks everyone for joining today. I might start off with one of the kind of key questions that we have heard from the sector so far which is how will the Gender Based Violence Regulator use annual reporting data? And it's a really good question. So I'd first like to highlight that we are an outcomes-based regulator focused on whether providers' systems and approaches are effectively preventing and responding to gender-based violence rather than focusing on technical compliance with individual data points in isolation.

So consistent with this approach we'll use reported data to understand risk, trends and maturity over time and to guide proportionate, supportive, regulatory engagement rather than taking punitive action based on single indicators. So in practice there are two key ways that we'll use annual reporting data. Firstly, we'll use it to monitor provider compliance with the National Code. And by this, I mean we'll use certain elements in annual reporting data alongside other sources of information to assess provider compliance and inform our compliance monitoring priorities.

This doesn't mean that a concerning data point will automatically or immediately result in deeming a provider non-compliant. Given the quantitative nature of the data that we've requested it is most likely to be used to flag areas where we would want to request further information to undertake further regulatory action including requesting additional information from a provider. For example, if data indicates that a provider is consistently not meeting the 45-day timeframe for resolving formal reports of gender-based violence we may seek more information to determine whether there may be underlying issues with that provider's systems and processes. This could reasonably identify that there are valid reasons for the length of time taken to complete these processes and therefore no further compliance action is required.

Secondly data will be used by us to help identify sector wide risks, trends and systemic issues. So as many of you will know data plays a critical role in understanding the nature and prevalence of gender-based violence, identifying the needs of diverse groups, measuring progress and informing policy and program design for continuous improvement. So reported data will help us as a regulator to analyse patterns in gender-based violence incidents across the sector and this is why data is being requested at the unit level rather than at the aggregated form. This analysis of sector wide risk, trends and systemic issues will inform guidance, capacity building and continuous improvement across the sector. And we're also considering how we can effectively share the aggregated sector wide data to support providers and other relevant parties to support improved prevention and response. Importantly our analysis and use of data will take into account broader contextual factors and trends.

I also wanted to address some of the concerns that we've heard around the prevalence of incident reporting. We anticipate that the introduction of the National Code as well as enhanced community information and awareness raising activities may contribute to an increase in the number of incidents being disclosed or reported. And this signals that gender-based violence is becoming less

tolerated within the community, that victim survivors are seeking help and that the providers' efforts to inform the community of accessible pathways to disclose, report and seek support are effective.

The purpose of data collection reporting under the National Code is not to admonish providers for instances of gender-based violence but rather to support the sector to effectively identify and respond to it. We just wanted to give that important caveat to this work.

I'll now move on and give a brief overview of what the Data Guidance document actually includes.

So the guidance we have issued aims to provide clear directions for providers on what they must collect, manage and report annual data under paragraph 6.12 to 6.14 of the National Code. It does this by outlining key dates for collecting and reporting data, what data to collect, including the scope of incidents to be reported and a detailed list of each data element to be collected for a reported incident, how to record and report data including clear advice on the format and accepted values for reporting purposes, and finally it explains how to collect data safely by reaffirming that data collection processes must be trauma informed and person centred.

As we noted earlier we understand that the National Code implements fairly substantial data collection requirements and as such it may take time to implement them safely. And for this reason the guidance outlines both mandatory and non-mandatory data elements for the first year of reporting. So mandatory data elements are those that we consider providers should have access to already and must be reported from the 2026 collection year onwards. These are mandatory as they relate to basic information about incidents, disclosers and respondents as well as the provider's response to the incident. And we expect providers will already be collecting this information.

Non-mandatory data elements are those that providers may have not previously collected and may not be immediately available for the 2026 collection year. These elements relate to more detailed or sensitive information that providers may not yet have the systems or processes in place to capture safely and effectively.

One of the questions we received about this was:

Q: Some data elements are mandatory from the get-go and others are not. Does this mean we shouldn't worry about the non-mandatory for now?

So we know that providers are at different stages of readiness in their data collection systems and some elements may require time to build capacity and implement safely. That is why we've made the distinction between mandatory and non-mandatory. Over time providers will be expected to show active progress towards collecting all the required data, for example by updating systems and processes to enable full collection. So data collection for year one for example will likely be limited mandatory elements for many providers but by years three and four may be expanded to include non-mandatory elements. It's important to consider this long term view when taking any systems or process upgrades or investments.

We also received a question that highlights the scope of annual reporting data and the guidance.

Q: So will we only have to report on incidents and disclosures or also on prevention and training initiatives?

So this is a great question. The Data Guidance only relates to annual data reporting requirements under Standards 6.12 to 6.14 of the National Code. This is a prescribed reporting requirement that providers must comply with on an annual basis.

Standard 6 of the National Code sets out a range of other data that the regulator may request from a provider. Some of the specific examples of this are included at Standards 6.8 to 6.11 and include things like process data on implementation of policies, procedures, plans and related activities including prevention and training initiatives.

Providers must ensure they familiarise themselves with these requirements to ensure compliance with any future requests for data and requests of this kind will likely be made on an ad hoc basis or through other mechanisms such as progress reporting. Providers should also be tracking data on broader initiatives and actions to prevent and respond to gender-based violence to support progress reporting against their whole of organisation plan which is due six monthly to the provider's governing body and every two years to the regulator.

I'll now hand back over to Michele who's going to talk you through the reporting date submission requirements and format for submission.

Michele Clark:

Thanks Kurt. So we received some questions about the reporting date submission requirements and format. So just to be very clear the data collection requirements under the National Code commenced on the 1st of January 2026 for Table A and B providers and will commence on the 1st of January 2027 for other providers registered under TEQSA.

So a quick note on kind of what that means in practice. So data will be reported by calendar year and will be due to us on the 30th of June the following year. So all of the data you're collecting from the 1st of January will be due to us in June of next year. That's for Table A and B providers. So that's six months for you to close off the calendar year sets of data, understand, have a look at it, and then provide it to us within that six month period. So non-university higher education providers will begin collecting their data on the 1st of January 2027 so the report to us will come by 30 June 2028.

But here's some specific questions we received that we just wanted to highlight a couple of aspects. So student accommodation providers. Standard 7 of the National Code requires student accommodation providers that are directly owned, managed, operated, controlled by or affiliated with a higher education provider to collect data as per the requirements of Standard 6 under the National Code. Providers must also have arrangements in place with student accommodation providers that are controlled by or otherwise affiliated with a higher education provider.

So higher education providers are responsible for collating the data that comes from student accommodation providers with their other data and then report to us in the single consolidated annual reporting mechanism.

We received some questions about duplication and the potential for that. Higher education providers must ensure that they have in place arrangements to avoid duplication where possible to avoid compromising the integrity of the data. For example when an incident may have been reported to both the student accommodation provider and the higher education provider this should be recorded as one single incident. Providers must consider the privacy and security

implications and determine appropriate arrangements for data sharing between student accommodation providers and the provider.

We received a particular question about balancing this advice to avoid duplication of data while wanting to make visible multiparty instances and repeated interactions. And we'll touch on how to report these kinds of incidents later in the webinar.

Okay. So some other questions we received. We received a question.

Q: Will you be providing a data reporting template and if so why has it not been provided yet?

And this is an excellent question so thank you for this one. The answer is yes. We will be providing a Microsoft Excel template for reporting and it is mandatory that you use it to provide your data to us. For many of you who have had involvement with IT projects I don't think it will come as a surprise to you that this is quite a complex endeavour that we have not been able to provide to you yet but we fully intend to. We are undertaking significant work in the back end of our systems to develop IT capability to facilitate our collection of data that's reported to us. And part of this process is developing a template which will allow for effective upload and verification and hopefully make it a seamless process for yourselves and us.

So the reporting template is dependent on the capabilities being finalised and that's why we haven't been able to provide it quite yet. It will be made available to you before the end of this year. And I really want to acknowledge this isn't ideal and we would have liked to provide the template alongside our data guidance. Given the breadth of data we're collecting across providers we just need to make sure that the IT systems we're developing as part of our establishment are sufficiently robust and any template we provide is checked methodically to ensure the data can be read and analysed in our IT systems. We also want to make sure that you're not faced with glitches if we roll something out that's not ready. We wanted however to issue this first series of advice about the Data Guidance, so you have as much information as possible to start to build your own systems as I know collection has already started.

So just a note on that before we move on to the next question about blank data fields. We need you to be aware that for each reported incident all data element fields must contain an accepted value. Unfortunately, that means that blank data will create big problems. So where a field is not applicable it just must be marked as N/A rather than being left blank. So this ensures that data integrity and quality is maintained when it's uploaded into our systems. And you'll see that in our Data Guidance, the template at the back. There is always an option for N/A there if the data isn't there.

We received a question about:

Q: Will the template be optional? What if we have an existing system that produces a report in a different format?

Well as I've alluded to in the last answer providers will be required to use the Microsoft Excel reporting template that we will issue because it's the way that will talk into our system. So no other submission format will be accepted. And this is to ensure that consistent collection of information for analysis purposes and ensure the high quality data. So providers must adhere to the accepted values required in the template. Those values will match those outlined in section 3.2 of the Data Guidance data elements. We know you will have commenced collecting data already and want to be

clear that the data elements outlined in the Data Guidance will be those that will be required by the template. We won't be adding anything additional to the template. It will just be a living example of the things that are in 3.2 already.

We're willing to work with you though. We really do acknowledge that in the first year of data collection there will be some teething problems and some systems issues to work through. So please come to us if you're experiencing lots of trouble about how to match our expectations with your systems and when the data template becomes available as well. If you have any issues with that please let us know.

Q: How will we submit data reporting?

So data will be uploaded using the specified template through the National Code web portal. This is an online facility which enables providers to securely provide data reporting and other information. The web portal will verify the upload data to ensure it complies with all the formatting requirements. Where errors are identified providers will be required to resubmit. For example if there is a blank field it will spit out an error.

So further information regarding the web portal including detailed user guides will be provided by our team shortly.

I'll hand back to Kurt now. He's going to talk about some of the questions we received on the scope of reporting.

Kurt Carmichael:

Perfect. Thank you Michele. So we got several questions about what data is in and out of scope for annual data reporting. It's important all providers are familiar with the table included at Appendix A of the Data Guidance because it sets out each data element to be collected for each in scope incident of gender-based violence and the accepted response options for each element. We'll answer some specific questions shortly but I wanted to underscore that you should refer to this table in the first instance to understand the scope of what needs to be collected and reported.

So for the purposes of reporting an in scope incident is any incident which relates to an allegation of gender-based violence perpetrated by or against a student or staff member of the higher education provider and is disclosed or reported to the higher education provider or a relevant student accommodation provider as per Standard 7.

So looking across the questions we received there are three key things we want to underscore. Firstly it's the categorisation as gender-based violence. We know a discloser or respondent may not always themselves categorise an incident as gender-based violence so providers will need to exercise discretion in determining whether a reported incident should be included in the annual data reporting. Judgment on this should be guided by the definition of gender-based violence provided in the National Code.

We also got many questions that reflect that some providers are concerned about the list of types of gender-based violence in the Data Guidance and that it doesn't fully encompass the experience of gender-based violence and what is currently being collected. So for example:

Q: Why doesn't violence type include family and domestic violence or intimate partner violence?

So the data elements table in the Data Guidance includes a list of accepted values for types of gender-based violence consistent with the definition in the National Code. The types of violence include for example sexual harassment, systems abuse, physical and non-physical violence. These can all be features of what may happen across different contexts of violence, for example within a family or domestic relationship, a dating or intimate partner relationship or in the workplace. For consistency the list of types is limited to the nature of the act or acts of violence.

Other data elements are deliberately included to cover the context for acts of violence, so those being the discloser's relationship to the respondent, the number of respondents involved, the additional persons or accomplices involved, and the location of the incident. So cross referencing these data elements will allow both providers and the regulator to identify forms of violence we know to be common including the family and domestic violence, intimate partner dating violence and workplace sexual harassment.

We acknowledge that the types of gender-based violence may not exactly correlate with your existing systems however there is a need to collect data consistently across the sector which will enable effective analysis. Providers can still choose to collect additional information about the types of gender-based violence being reported provided they can meet the specific reporting requirements of the gender-based violence regulator.

The National Code applies as well regardless of where the gender-based violence occurs. So as such providers must include in their annual data reporting all instances of gender-based violence reported to them which involve a current student or staff member regardless of where it occurred. This includes instances where gender-based violence occurs at an external event, in a bar or in someone's workplace or home.

I'll now go to a couple of the specific questions that we received about scope.

Q: How does the level of detail required for annual reporting interact with providers' internal reporting processes? Should providers be aiming to provide the same level of detail they have internally if this is more?

So we recognise that different providers will have different internal reporting systems and processes. The National Code does not prescribe a single model for how internal data should be collected or managed internally. For annual reporting to the regulator providers must be able to supply the level of detail set out in the Data Guidance and required under the National Code. This means that regardless of how your internal systems currently operate you will need to ensure you can extract and report all data elements as specified in the Data Guidance.

As Michele mentioned earlier the data upload template will not allow any additional fields of data to be provided to the regulator. Providers can of course choose to collect additional information internally if it supports their broader prevention and response work. And providers should ensure privacy and security is considered as part of any internal reporting. For National Code compliance the key requirement is that all mandatory data elements and over time all required elements including non-mandatory can be accurately reported to us.

We also received a few questions about historical or ongoing incidents. So all incidents of gender based violence disclosed or reported to the provider within a reporting period must be included in annual data reporting regardless of when that incident occurred and including where the matter is still ongoing, so for example where there's an investigation or appeal still underway. So if someone discloses or formally reports a historic incident within a reporting period this should be included in the annual reporting data for that period. In reporting that incident you'll need to include the date that the incident occurred or the dates that the incidents occurred which will demonstrate if for example this is a historical or recent incident.

In terms of an ongoing incident where the response to a report or disclosure is still ongoing at the end of a reporting period this should also be included in data reporting, noting that it can be reported as ongoing as part of our data elements requirements. We may separately follow up with providers to seek information about the outcomes of those incidents just to ensure compliance with the National Code where it's appropriate.

Another question we got is:

Q: Are providers required to report pre-existing complaints, for example those lodged prior to 1 January 2026, that remain ongoing or were finalised after the 1st of January 2026?

So the answer to this is no. Where an incident was reported to the provider prior to the 1st of January 2026 it must not be included in annual reporting for 2026. And that same approach will apply for non-university higher education providers in 2027. However in saying this providers should still seek to align their approach to managing any outstanding disclosures in line with the standards of the National Code to ensure an effective and safe response for disclosers and respondents. So that's more around best practice.

Finally we also received several enquiries about disclosures made to medical or counselling services. So specifically providers asked:

Q: Does a disclosure of gender-based violence made to clinicians need to be reported to the provider and how does this interact with clinical privacy requirements and doctor/patient confidentiality?

So a really good question and a really complex question. So we do not expect that disclosures made to doctors or medical professionals, even when working in a provider operated service, will be included in data reporting. We are working through some additional guidance in relation to other professionals working in provider operated services such as psychologists and counsellors. This is quite a complex area and we're taking appropriate time to consider how we can balance avoiding potential disincentives for victim survivors to seek help with the need to collect full and meaningful data from providers. We'll provide further clarity on the regulator's expectations on this within the next month and this will be flagged in our e-news to ensure you're all aware of it being shared.

I will now hand back over to Michele who's going to answer some more questions on safety and privacy.

Michele Clark:

Thanks Kurt. So we received several questions on student safety. Many of them relate to deidentification of data. So I'll touch on that briefly before answering specific questions. And I can see that we've also got a question in our Q&A function from Danielle in a similar vein.

So deidentification. In line with Standard 6.3(c) all data must be deidentified before it is provided to us. The template we'll provide will be designed to specifically prevent accidental uploading of identifiable information such as names, addresses, staff/student ID numbers. However providers should also consider whether other reportable characteristics may result in a student being identifiable. For example if a discloser or respondent has a number of unique characteristics they may be reasonably identifiable. Where this is the case providers should remove characteristics when reporting to us.

This is a tricky area and we really acknowledge that. So you can contact us for support navigating this, however just please note when interacting with us to be very careful about that identification data and the sensitivity of that information.

Another question we received was:

Q: Our student and staff cohort is pretty small. What do we do if capturing and submitting certain data points poses a risk to an individual, be it either discloser or respondent being identified?

So we really acknowledge the need to balance capturing data with privacy and doing it in a way that's sensitive and trauma informed. Staff and student safety must always be the priority and collecting data must never supersede safety. All data reported must be deidentified so that the information is no longer about an identified individual or an individual who is reasonably identifiable. This is a requirement under section 6.3(c) of the National Code.

So particular consideration should be given to the sample population size or identifiable characteristics which could result in a discloser or respondent being identified and having their privacy compromised. Applying a trauma informed approach is central to the National Code. So if a provider has any concerns that data may lead to identification they can reasonably take steps to deidentify this data before it comes to us. This may for example include the removal of one or multiple demographic characteristics as they relate to a small cohort. I hope that answers your question Danielle.

Another question we received was multiple people asked about providers being required to record sensitive information, for example sexuality, religious affiliation or sex assigned at birth, noting this may conflict with a person centred and trauma informed approach, and asked us for clarity on how this should be managed. All data collection processes must be trauma informed and person centred and providers need to prioritise safety, privacy and security when engaging with students and staff. That is the guiding principle for the Code.

We recognise that some providers may not yet have the systems or processes in place to capture sensitive information safely and effectively and this is why these elements are currently identified as non-mandatory. Providers are not required to collect these elements if doing so would compromise a trauma informed approach. Providers should use their judgment on how and when sensitive questions are asked to ensure individuals feel safe and supported. Where it is possible to collect data in a safe, trauma informed way all data fields should be completed but where this is not possible you mark these elements as unknown.

We received a question of:

Q: Will Child Safe Organisation Act requirements be included so that reporting of incidences involving children under 18 can be done at the same time?

So compliance with state and territory legislation such as the Queensland Child Safe Organisation Act are the responsibility of the individual providers. The scope of the annual reporting requirements is limited to gender based violence data as outlined in the National Code. For annual data reporting we will not require inclusion of any data beyond what is noted as required under Standards 6.12 to 6.14 of the National Code. This does not preclude providers from streamlining their own processes and collecting broader data in their own systems such as obligations under state and territory or other Commonwealth legislation.

And I'll hand back to Kurt now to talk about data elements.

No. I can see Jo. Maybe we have a question. Jo did you want to jump in?

Joanna Brislane:

We have several questions so I just wanted to throw them to Kurt before the start of this section around data elements. So the first from Mara is:

Q: Will data be required on the discloser, reporter and respondent?

Kurt Carmichael:

Yeah. Fantastic question. So the short answer to that is largely yes, although it primarily will focus on the discloser and the respondent. So the data elements table which is provided at Appendix A of the Data Guidance includes all of the data that providers will be required to collect. So the first kind of section of that data relates to information about the incident itself. The second part relates to information about the discloser. Then there's a section on information about the respondent, and finally information about how the provider has responded to the incident. So yes is the answer to that question.

Joanna Brislane:

And there's also a question from Kate.

Q: Will the regulator require individual university data be published?

Kurt Carmichael:

Yeah. Another great question. So no is the answer to that. There's no requirement under the National Code and at this stage we don't have any expectation that providers will publish individual data. Obviously there's a lot of complexity there around ensuring privacy and security and that could be problematic for some providers. I think we briefly mentioned earlier one of the things that we'll be looking to do as a regulator is looking at the sector wide data once we've received it and consolidated it to consider what information we're able to kind of share publicly. And that's very much about supporting effective prevention and response and what information will be valuable to do that. I hope I'm not going too far Michele in saying that I anticipate we'll probably consult quite

heavily with providers around how we're going to share that data before that's done. And obviously a really key consideration of that is privacy and security. That will absolutely be of the utmost importance to us in that consideration.

Joanna Brislane:

Thanks Kurt. And I'll throw you one more before you carry on with what you're going to answer.
From Lara.

Q: Can you tell us whether and how the location of incidents will be reported and how third party organisations not only student accommodation providers might be listed in doing that?

Kurt Carmichael:

Yeah. Certainly. So it's actually great timing for this question. I would encourage you to have a look at Appendix A of the Data Guidance because it actually sets out the accepted values for where an incident took place and how that should be reported in quite a bit of detail. And it also does allow for consideration of third party kind of providers and supports as well. So I'd encourage you to have a look at Appendix A. If after having quite a detailed look at that please do kind of come back to us if there's further clarification that you need on that.

I might keep going with some of the data elements. So Appendix A does set out quite a bit of information so if people haven't had a look at that yet really encourage you to do so. It actually includes the very specific response options that will be accepted for each data element. And to be clear providers will need to use those accepted response values. So you won't be able to provide different responses other than what's in there. Again that's very much about the fact that we're going to be pulling together initially 42 providers worth of data but in future as non university higher education providers come on board we're actually going to have quite a significant number of providers reporting to us and we need to ensure there's consistency across the board for analysis purposes.

We received several detailed questions about specific data elements. And noting we've got some limited time here we wanted to answer as many as possible so we're actually going to pop responses to those questions into the chat now. And of course these will also be included in our frequently asked questions that get published on our website so definitely encourage people to have a look at that.

One of the key questions I did want to answer was about the use of the term 'incident'. So we acknowledge that gender-based violence is rarely a single isolated event and we were aware that the term 'incident' may cause some confusion. So we've included a clarifying note on page 5 of the Data Guidance. We use the term 'incident' to refer to occurrences of gender-based violence in alignment with the wording that's used in the National Code. But again we want to recognise this terminology can unintentionally reinforce individualised responses and obscure the systemic and structural nature of gender-based violence. So unfortunately it's just a case of we had to use a term which was included in the National Code but we acknowledge that there are always problematic kind of consequences of particular language.

Another question that we received was:

Q: If there are multiple disclosures of the same incident, so for example a victim survivor disclosure followed by reports from bystanders, should these be recorded and reported as a single incident with multiple reporters or multiple disclosure records?

So where there's multiple disclosures about what the provider believes or knows to be the same underlying incident each disclosure should still be reported separately. This means that every disclosure received within a reporting period regardless of whether it applies to the same incident should be recorded and reported as its own entry in annual reporting data. I suppose the one exception to that is where it's the same person making that report in which case the provider should be seeking to kind of avoid duplication. So as Michele mentioned earlier if a discloser made a disclosure to both a student accommodation provider and a higher education provider and it's known that that was the same kind of disclosure about the same incident you would look to avoid duplication there where possible.

A few other questions we received related to data elements, highlighted where we needed to make some small amendments to the Data Guidance document. And we really thank you, to the eagle eyed person who brought those to our attention. The updates will largely provide additional clarity to support providers. But I do want to note there is one data element in the Appendix A which will be updated to include some additional accepted values. So it's not removing any accepted values but we are going to add some additional accepted values. We'll also make an update to clarify data collection requirements related to overseas incidents, noting this was another area that's been raised with us. So what's currently in the Data Guidance needs to be updated and we'll action this as soon as possible. The updated version will go on our website and we'll also ensure that our next e-news which will come out mid-April links to the updated version also.

We're very conscious that providers will be using this Data Guidance already and the data elements table to inform updates to individual systems. And we don't anticipate making further changes after this update is issued. So again we really want to reiterate that we understand that you'll be basing a lot of investment and decisions around this data guidance and the elements that we've contained and so we are looking to lock them down so that you've got certainty going forward.

If you've not signed up to our mailing list we encourage you to do so and there will be a sign up link in the chat of this webinar shortly.

I think we've popped those frequently asked questions into the chat Jo I believe. Do we have any more kind of questions that we wanted to answer?

Joanna Brislane:

So just to be clear for everyone those listed on the slide at the moment are questions that I've put a response to in the chat. Every question that was asked and responded to today along with these will be posted on our website under FAQs so that those who aren't here will be able to see them. And there is a couple more questions here Kurt that have cropped up.

Q: Should bystander reporting be actively promoted at the university?

Kurt Carmichael:

That is a fantastic question and probably one that I'll get yourself or Michele to draw on. I would certainly suggest that in line with the kind of intent of the National Code bystanders should be encouraged to seek support from their university where that's needed, noting that obviously bystanders could also experience trauma as a result of certain events. So if that is the case absolutely. I think bystanders should be encouraged to seek support from their university and that may then result in inclusion in reporting. Michele I don't know if you wanted to add to that response at all?

Michele Clark:

Great answer. The only thing I would add is yes, as a provider you'll want to know what's going on. That's the essence of how you actually take action to start to prevent and respond to gender based violence. So I would be encouraging people to make reports if they see something that reaches this threshold and that you will want to know about.

Joanna Brislane:

And there's one more question here.

Q: Will the Department provide privacy advice regarding PIAs and data consent collection notice requirements or wording?

Michele Clark:

Yes. Another great question. We will provide some advice on that. We have been grappling with the consent question ourselves. And because it's deidentified data consent isn't required for information to be provided to us because it doesn't obviously identify people. However how that fits with a trauma informed person centred approach is an excellent question. So we will take that away. We're going to do some really hard thinking about that and provide some additional advice to help you navigate that quite challenging conversation as well. Thank you for the question.

Kurt Carmichael:

If I could just add quickly to that one Michele I might just add there is some content in the guidance material about privacy so encourage people to have a look at that. It links to some useful resources. I would probably caveat that by saying there was a question around privacy impact assessments. I don't think that for example we would be in a position to be undertaking detailed privacy impact assessments. It will likely be up to providers to be undertaking their own privacy impact assessments on their own systems and processes.

Michele Clark:

And I'm just actually going to jump in and reference the question from Matthew there about the third party bystander that discloses. So one thing to really pay attention to – because the first time I read this guidance when we were developing it this one caught me out – is that there's a disclosure is made but that doesn't necessarily mean it was made by the discloser. The discloser is the person who has been impacted by the gender-based violence. So you might have a third party make a disclosure but not be the discloser if that makes sense. We've tried to put some wording in the guidance to make that distinction, to make it very clear that actually when you're answering

questions about the discloser and the demographic details of that person that it's about the person who the gender-based violence has impacted, not necessarily the person who's reported the incident. So have a look at the guidance on that one. But absolutely if you find it still isn't making sense in a practical way please let us know and talk to us about it so we can provide guidance that makes sense for implementation.

Joanna Brislane:

We're at time so any of those last couple of questions that have just come through I will seek to answer once we've shut down or I can reach out because they have people's names on them. I'll reach out and make sure that we let you all know the answer to those. So thank you so much everyone for coming along and for your questions. Michele I'll pass over to you to wrap us up.

Michele Clark:

Thank you everyone for attending today and thank you for your active participation and questions. We really did hear feedback that the way we can best support you moving forward with implementation is for these to be as interactive as possible. So hopefully the format worked with us accepting questions early and then responding to them here, but also being here to answer extra questions and take more on board. If today's session has sparked more questions in your mind please reach out and let us know and we'll help to answer those as well.

So a recording and transcript of today's session will be uploaded onto our website shortly and as Jo said all the questions and answers on our questions and answer page.

So the higher education sector is obviously a really critical partner in this national effort to address gender-based violence. We look forward to continuing to work alongside you to continuously build environments where safety is the norm, disclosure leads to support and every member of our community can thrive. Thank you for your time. Have a happy Easter and enjoy the rest of your day.

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

[End of Transcript]