Putting Respect and Equality into Practice in the Classroom



RESPECT AND EQUALITY

Our Watch

Preventing violence against women

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country

Our Watch acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land across Australia on which we work and live. We pay respects to Elders past and present and recognise the continuing connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to land, culture, knowledge, and language for over 65,000 years.

As a non-Aboriginal organisation, Our Watch understands that violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is an issue for the whole community. As highlighted in Our Watch's national resource *Changing the picture*, the evidence clearly shows the intersection between racism, sexism, and violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

Our Watch has an ongoing commitment to the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children, who continue to suffer from violence at a significantly higher rate than non-Aboriginal women. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations who continue to lead the work of sharing knowledge with non-Indigenous people and relentlessly advocate for an equitable, violence-free future in Australia.



Five Victorian TAFEs participated in the Respect and Equality in TAFE pilot from 2019 - 2021, which resulted in the development and publication of the first iteration of this guide published in 2022:

- Bendigo Kangan Institute
- Chisholm Institute
- Melbourne Polytechnic
- SuniTAFE
- Swinburne University of Technology.

Five further TAFEs and dual sectors nationwide participated in testing and refining the suite of Respect and Equality resources, published in 2025:

- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
- Canberra Institute of Technology
- Charles Darwin University
- TAFE SA
- TasTAFE.

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Australian Government

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Responding to disclosures of gender-based violence

If someone tells you they are experiencing any form of violence, whether it is perpetrated by a family member, intimate partner, acquaintance, colleague or someone else, it is important to respond in a supportive way.

As an educator you need a good understanding of how to respond to students and colleagues if they disclose gender-based violence. You are not responsible to 'resolve' or 'manage' any disclosure.

Your role is to act in accordance with your institute's gender-based violence response and prevention policies and procedures and refer the person to the appropriate specialist services within your TAFE institute or your local community, for example your local family violence or sexual assault service or perpetrator intervention program.

Your role is to:

- ***recognise*** the signs of gender-based violence
- ***respond*** with appropriate care
- ***act*** in accordance with your institute's response and prevention policies and procedures
- ***refer*** to support services.

If a person is in immediate danger encourage them to call 000.

National helpline services

- **13YARN** 13 92 76
- **1800RESPECT** 1800 737 732
- **Kids Helpline** 1800 55 1800
- **Lifeline** 131 114
- **Qlife** 1800 184 527
- **Men's Referral Service** 1300 766 491
- **National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline** 1800 880 052
- **Relationships Australia** 1300 364 277

Introduction and context

As an educator, you have great influence over the things students learn, the way they learn, and the environment in which they learn. You have an important role to play in creating equal and respectful classroom settings and practical placements which can positively influence community attitudes to gender equality.

In Australia and internationally, gender equality is recognised as a human right and a precondition to social justice. It is also proven to be directly linked to the prevention of gender-based violence.[1]

The increased awareness of the importance of gender equality by government, employers and communities has highlighted the need for the general workforce to have the skills and knowledge that will allow them to support gender equality through their work. As a TAFE educator, assessor or placement/apprenticeship coordinator, you are distinctively placed to ensure the vocational workforce is appropriately skilled in gender equality and respectful practices. Through your practice, you support students during critical transitions from school to work, career change and mature aged people returning to study for the first time.

The information in this guide presents opportunities for you to increase your students' understanding of the benefits of gender equality, diversity and inclusion while achieving their learning outcomes. It will also give you insights into how you can create equitable learning environments so that all learners can thrive, regardless of their sex, gender or gender identity.

> **"Over many years of gender reform in Australian education, the term 'gender lens' has been drawn on to encourage educators and others working for gender equity and justice to look critically at how gender is constructed and how it plays out in learning spaces. This term invites us to think about how we position ourselves and position others within various discourses and understandings about gender."[2]**
>
> — The Association of Women Educators

This guide is to assist educators across all departments to apply a gender lens to curriculum, classrooms, practical placements/apprenticeships and assessment practices. It provides tips on reflective practice and strategies to promote gender equality and support inclusion in teaching materials, in the classroom, industry placements and assessments.

A note on language

This document will for the most part use the terms 'technical and further education (TAFE)' and 'vocational education and training (VET)' interchangeably to refer to VET, TAFE, and dual-sector institutions.

The role of teaching and learning

As identified as part of the Respect and Equality in TAFE model, teaching and learning is a key domain where gender equality can be promoted in TAFEs.

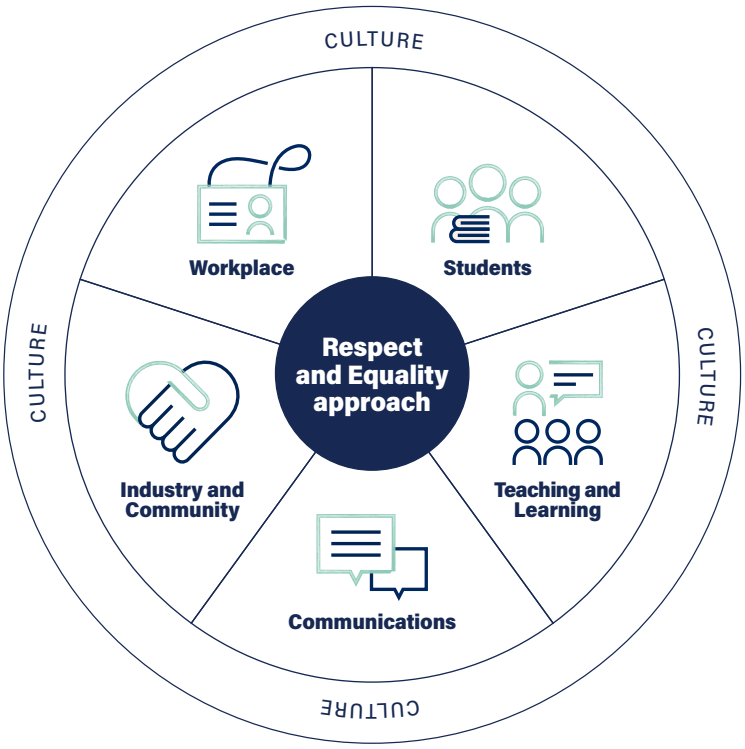
Respect and Equality: Working together to prevent gender-based violence National Guide for TAFE, VET and dual-sector institutions outlines a whole-of-organisation approach for preventing gender-based violence within TAFE and within the communities and industries that TAFEs directly influence.

Gender inequality and gender-based violence are caused by a range of interacting and reinforcing factors that occur at individual, organisational and societal levels. No single approach, individual or organisation can address the complexity of the issue alone.

Evidence shows that a whole-of-organisation approach, one that takes into account the various ways in which different genders are impacted by inequitable attitudes, behaviours and systems, works in improving gender equality. Furthermore, as a place of learning, growth, development and socialisation, education institutions can play a significant role in contributing to gender equality outcomes for individuals, communities and society as a whole.

Teaching and learning are important elements of a whole-of-organisation approach to building a supportive TAFE environment that promotes gender equality and respect. By applying a gender lens to your teaching practice, you can help prevent violence against women and their children, and support a culture where gender stereotypes are challenged, gender-based violence is unacceptable, and gender equality is actively promoted and modelled.

Below: The five key domains of the Respect and Equality in TAFE approach.



Gender inequality

Gender inequality results from, or has historical roots in, laws or policies formally constraining the rights of women, and is reinforced and maintained today through more informal mechanisms. These include, for example, social norms such as the beliefs that underpin gender stereotyping; practices such as differences in childrearing practices for boys and girls, or gender bias in organisational practices; and structures such as pay differences between men and women. Such norms, practices and structures encourage women and men, boys and girls to adopt distinct gender identities and stereotyped gender roles within a gender hierarchy that historically positions men as superior to women, and masculine roles and identities as superior to feminine ones.[3]

Gender equality and the drivers of gender-based violence

Change the story is the evidence-based shared framework for the primary prevention of gender-based violence and their children in Australia.[4]

Change the story identifies four key gendered drivers of gender-based violence:

1. condoning of gender-based violence, including not believing women when they report violence and blaming women for violence they experience.
2. men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life, such as a lack of representation of women in senior positions. Women comprise 22% of CEOs, 34% of board members and 18% of board chairs.[5]
3. rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity, such as the belief that men must be strong or stoic whereas women are emotional.
4. male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control, including criticising other men for not being 'manly' enough.

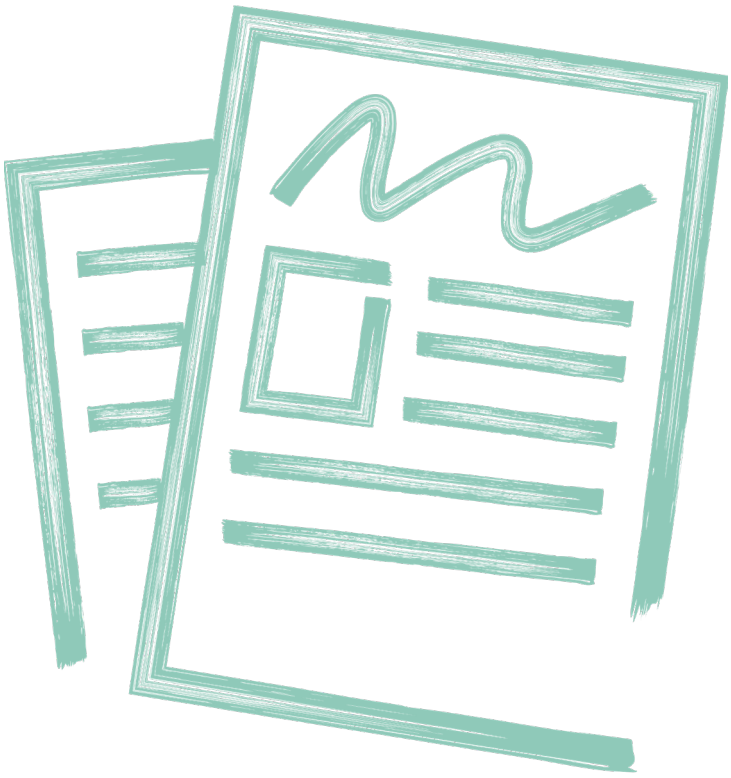
Educators influence how students learn, what they learn, and the environment in which they learn. They have an important role to play in creating equal and respectful classroom cultures where all students can freely participate. Teaching practice that promotes gender equality, inclusivity and respect can have a profound impact on students' classroom experience.[6] and contributes to the prevention of gender-based violence.



How will a gender lens improve my teaching?

The benefits of applying a gendered approach to your teaching and assessment practices include:

- Increasing the likelihood that students will broaden their aspirations and reach their potential due to a learning environment that discourages adherence to gender norms.
- Meeting the growing demand and expectation across many industries for workers with a strong understanding of gender equitable work practices to meet legal and ethical obligations.
- Demonstrating preparation for, and adherence to increasing compliance and regulatory processes for a gender equitable institute.
- Transforming gender delineated job roles through teaching practices, thereby attracting more women and gender-diverse people into more male dominated industries and more men into the female dominated industries. Effective gender equality programs in educational institutes can help reduce the gender segregation of the future workforce.
- Enhancing teaching capability and currency by participating in gender equality professional development opportunities.
- Contributing to women and gender-diverse people being safe and having their human rights respected.
- Contributing to positive health outcomes for men and boys. Men and boys who rigidly conform to stereotypes of masculinity such as being tough and in control, being aggressive and not expressing their emotions are subject to poorer health outcomes including higher rates of depression and suicide.[7]



How do I apply a gender lens?

Applying a gender lens to teaching is not simply 'adding' women and gender diverse people to current teaching materials. It involves thinking holistically about who your students are. Your students include women, men and gender diverse people from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, diverse socio-economic status, of various age groups and abilities, and with diverse life experiences.

Having a strong understanding of the influence and impact of gender (and other forms of discrimination) can change how you interpret and create training content. Hidden gender biases in curriculum and the socialisation of gender roles lead to inequitable education for women, men and gender diverse people.

Gender is recognised nationally and internationally as one of the major factors that determines access to and engagement with education. If we assume that gender has no impact, we ignore and fail to redress the existing gender-based differences that influence a person's educational opportunities and outcomes. By ignoring gender, or assuming it has no impact, we can reinforce and perpetuate existing gender-based inequities and differences in education statuses for both women and men.

As a TAFE educator it is important to reflect on how gender impacts your students in numerous ways and how not considering gender can perpetuate existing gender stereotypes, maintain the status quo, and provide unequal outcome for women, men and gender diverse people.

A student's gender influences their daily engagement with TAFE. By identifying the ways that gender discrimination and inequality operate in a particular situation, you can take steps towards improving these conditions.

Applying a gender lens to your teaching methods, curriculum content, classroom dynamics, practical activities and placements can assist in challenging gender inequality.

Training

- *Change the story* training
- *Equal Space learning modules*

Applying a gender lens

Example

The youth work sector is diverse, dynamic and includes a spectrum of models responding to the diverse needs of young people in Australia.

An educator in a youth work course applies a 'gender lens' by asking themselves:

- whose voice is being heard?
- whose voice is missing?
- is there an unintended gender bias in the materials and examples we reference in this course?

Considering these questions and reviewing their teaching practice and curriculum they notice that prescribed texts are written mainly by male authors, guest speakers are mainly white men, and assessments are focused on explorations of a limited range of youth work practices.

This is not deliberate, but shows an opportunity to better represent the diversity of youth work and support gender equality. The educator reviews the content of the curriculum to ensure it better reflects gender diversity among youth and in the youth work sector. They also make changes to be sure course content reflects and serves young people from diverse identities, communities and backgrounds.

Applying a gender lens

Scenario – curriculum

Details

The student group is predominantly men and school leavers, with a small number of women, some of whom are mature aged students.

Task

In teaching manual handling to building apprentices, the guidelines suggest the maximum weight an adult should lift at work is 25 kilograms. This relates to loads held close to the body at around waist height.

Young workers under the age of 18 years should not be required to lift, lower or carry objects weighing more than 16 kilograms without mechanical or other assistance, which may include team lifting and/or particular training for the task.

For older workers, increasing age may be associated with decreasing physical capacity. However, age alone is not sufficient for assessing risk, as older workers may be able to compensate for any physical loss through their experience and skill at the task.

Result

When not considering gender:

- The curriculum refers to the National Code of Practice for manual handling. You provide the students with a copy of the code and work through the code of practice to ensure students are fully aware of their and their employer's obligations. As an example, you demonstrate the correct manual lifting of a 20 kilograms object.
- All students are required to demonstrate the correct lifting of the same object.

When applying a gender lens:

- The age, weight, build and fitness of the students varies. You reflect on this and demonstrate how students can lift the object using various methods not all requiring physical strength. You discuss that in certain circumstances, employees (and students) may have specific needs that affect how they can lift. These needs may be permanent or temporary, for example, when returning to work from an illness or extended leave of absence, during pregnancy, because of a specific disability, different levels of strength or experience.
- You allocate to each student a method of lifting and ask them to demonstrate the lift. You assist individual students in appropriately lifting the object using differing methods and discuss the pros and cons of having the skills to lift in a variety of ways and not always having to rely on physical strength.

What is an intersectional lens?

An intersectional lens helps us consider the experiences and voices of people with diverse backgrounds to create environments that remove barriers to fair treatment and inclusion. Difference is not necessarily bad; diversity makes our communities stronger and allows us all to make unique contributions. However, difference can also impact on the power we have within ourselves and in relation to others. An intersectional lens is used not just to see differences in people, but also differences in power and status that emerge because of intersecting forms of discrimination.

Viewing the world through an intersectional lens assists you to identify gender inequality and gender-based discrimination in everyday contexts. By applying an intersectional lens to your teaching practice, you will see the diverse needs, preferences and opportunities that exist for students with different gender identities, sexualities, cultures, and accessibility needs and begin to consider ways to address these differences through your teaching.

Resources

- Respect and Equality: *Intersectionality in practice guide*
- *What is intersectionality?*
- *The weight of inequality*
- *Intersectional lens*

It is critical that, as an educator, you have the capacity to embed gender equality effectively in your teaching practice; to use language that is relevant; and to help students develop their own ability to apply a gender lens.

- Respect and Equality: *Working together to prevent gender-based violence*

Gender equality and gender-based violence training:

- *Equal Space videos, audio episodes, and learning modules*

An intersectional lens provides the opportunity to understand that not all women are disadvantaged in the same way and not all men are privileged in the same way. Gender inequality intersects with other forms of discrimination and systemic inequality such as racism, ableism, ageism, homophobia, classism etc. Therefore, applying an intersectional lens effectively means we should address gender inequality as well as other forms of discrimination and inequality. In this way we recognise the complex and multiple experiences we all have, and we can be more inclusive of all learners.

Honing your intersectional lens will help you to become more reflective and self-aware as an educator and identify how you can put students' learning needs at the centre of your work.

Definitions

Gender equality – involves equality for people of all genders. This term is used in the substantive sense to mean not only equality of opportunity but also equal or just outcomes (sometimes also called equity). It requires the redistribution of power, resources and responsibilities between men and women in particular, and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures that create and sustain gender inequality.

Gender equity – process of being fair to people of all genders. To ensure fairness, measures must often be put in place to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. Equity is a mean. Equality is the result.[8]

Applying a gender lens

Scenario – assessment

Details

The student group is diverse and consists of some mature aged students, some young men and female students of various cultural and economic backgrounds.

Task

An assessment activity designed to demonstrate students' ability to research and develop a video presentation on the value of solar in a large housing development.

The assessment needs to be completed in groups outside of class time.

Result

When not considering gender:

- All students are provided with the same assessment criteria and completion timelines.
- All students have mobile phones that they can use and all students have access to the library for resources.
- The assessment is fair and equal.

When applying a gender and intersectional lens:

- Not all students have the same capacity to complete this assessment. The mature aged students may have parental or carer responsibilities so their time outside class maybe very limited. Not all students have the same access to both media skills and equipment. Some have smart phones and others may not. The groups are self-selecting, so those students who are less confident may not feel they can join specific groups.
- The assessment can meet the same criteria if it was done in class time, groups could be allocated rather than self-selecting, training in basic media skills using phones could be offered to all students.

In a classroom context an equitable learning environment might look like this:

- When planning a discussion or lesson you consider equity in participation. Some students are very vocal, while others are quieter. You plan ways to keep all students active and engaged in the learning so all students' ideas are shared and represented. You allow additional time for all students to comment or ask questions. You have small group discussions and projects. You think about diverse mediums through which ideas and information can be presented, for example texts, guest speakers, online tools, or industry visits.
- When thinking about the texts you could use to explore topics relating to multiculturalism, consider incorporating texts that explore alternative opinions or view history from a perspective that may not be present in the mainstream texts.
- When thinking about the various styles in which students learn, employ a range of teaching techniques to demonstrate the skill being taught such as visual and audio materials which present role models of equal status for females, males and gender-diverse people. All learning materials include equal women's and men's voices and representation, classroom environments are free of discriminatory comments and behaviours. You call out sexual, racist, homophobic, ageist and ableist comments.

If you teach in courses where students are predominantly men, this is particularly important. You are working in areas of TAFE where masculine gender norms are perpetuated and where women and gender-diverse people can be marginalised. Consider conceptualising a way of teaching that accommodates a range of student learning and life experiences (rather than expecting all students to accommodate to a model based on rigid stereotype of masculinity).

Applying a gender lens to your practice can promote student engagement and increase the flexibility and choice of students, while protecting the integrity of the relevant qualifications.

Key elements of applying a gender and intersectional lens

When applying a gender and an intersectional lens, there are **four key elements** to engage with:

Element 1.
Examining curriculum

Element 2.
Classroom delivery

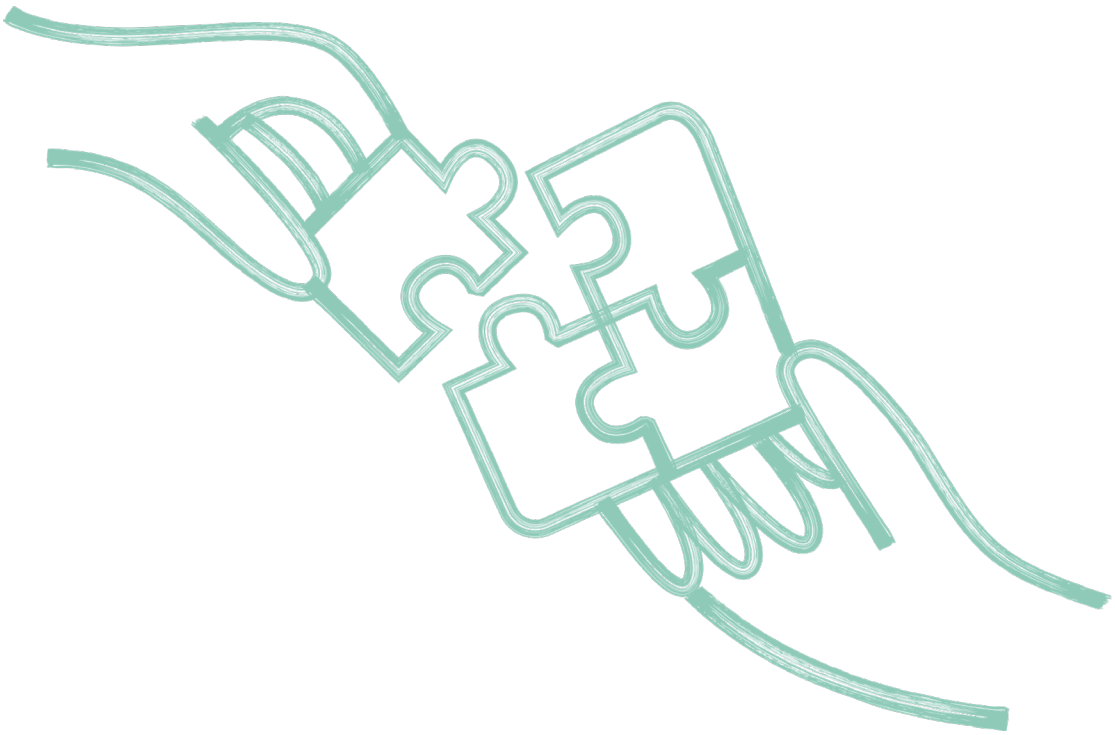
Element 3.
Practical placements and apprenticeships

Element 4.
Assessment.

On the following pages you can learn more about these four key elements, see strategies and tips and complete a series of exercises looking at ways you can apply a gender lens.

Resources

- Deakin University Inclusive Education Principles (Deakin University resource)
- LGBTIQ+ inclusive language guide (Victorian Government webpage)
- *Pride in Prevention Messaging Guide: A guide for communications and engagement to support primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities* (Rainbow Health resource)
- *Equal Space – Anti-violence Toolkit: An intersectional lens*



Element 1. Examining curriculum

Having a strong understanding of the influence and impact of sexism and other forms of discrimination can change how you interpret and create training content. Hidden gender biases in curriculum and the socialisation of gender roles can lead to inequitable education for men, women and gender-diverse people. Your current teaching materials may not include an awareness of gender roles and racial stereotypes, sexual harassment, and discrimination, nor reflect the experiences of diverse student populations.

Gender stereotypes are beliefs and assumptions about the attributes or characteristics that are innate or appropriate for women and men.[9] Gender stereotypes not only influence how individuals act, raise their children and relate to others, they also inform wider social norms and can result in punishment for people of all genders when they don't conform to expected gender roles.[10] For example, stereotypes about women as naturally nurturing and men as naturally rational underpin the belief that women prefer to work in the caring professions, whereas men prefer to work in trades.

While stereotypes are both harmful and limiting, this is not to say that being 'rational' or 'nurturing' are negative character traits – for anyone. Rather, it is the practice of promoting and enforcing gender stereotypes that is harmful, because it falsely promotes rigid distinctions between the skills, attributes and characteristics of women and men, in a way that positions 'masculine' traits as having higher social value than 'feminine' traits. This influences how people act and interact and creates gendered power relationships and sexist organisational and institutional cultures.

Stereotypes can be harmful, as they can impact on the way students think and feel about themselves, and how they interact with others in the classroom and in the workplace, as well as their aspirations for their future. It is important that we work to become more aware of any gender-biased tendencies we may have, that we work to change any biased practices, and commit to exploring and combating gender bias in educational materials.

Apply a gender lens to this scenario

You are searching for resources in your text lists to prepare for a lesson. You see that most of the authors are male.

What can you do?

Questions	Strategies and tips
Do any texts I use omit women, or tokenise their experiences?	Design a lesson on gender that relates to the course or subject you are teaching, i.e., if you are teaching business, economics or community services you could explore gendered pay discrimination in the Australian workforce: ▪ Women and gender-diverse people continue to earn less than men, are less likely to advance their careers as far as men, and accumulate less retirement or superannuation savings. ▪ Men have less access than women to family-friendly policies such as parental leave or flexible working arrangements. What are the gender gaps that students see in their field of study? **Resource:** Workplace Gender Equality Agency website
Do the teaching materials I use present men in stereotypically dominant masculine roles such as sports and leadership, or women in stereotypically feminine roles such as parenting and caring?	Call out sexist notions or terminology in texts used in the classroom, for example, a textbook, magazine article, poem, research report, or blog post. You can also highlight any gender stereotypical language used by students in the classroom and design activities to invite broader discussion on the impact of such language.
Is it clear in the teaching materials that men and women are not restricted to traditionally 'masculine' or 'feminine' qualities and interests?	Consider how you could explore with your students the value of gender diversity in their chosen field. For example, what men can bring to the child care industry and women and gender-diverse people to trades areas. **Resource:** Tradeswomen Australia website
Does the suggested reading list include diverse perspectives? Is the reading list dominated by white male authors and perspectives?	Ensure that there is a broad representation of views, not just across gender but also culturally. For example, when teaching Design students include prominent artists who are men, women and gender diverse people, from different cultural backgrounds and countries of origin. This will enhance the learning experiences of the students.
Have I considered the implications for underrepresented students if they are enrolled in gender desegregated courses, i.e., women and gender-diverse people in trades/men in the caring industries?	Design a class activity to investigate strategies to be successful in a work environment.

Element 2. Classroom delivery

Every classroom provides an opportunity to address the drivers of gender-based violence. You have an opportunity to model gender equality and respect through your interaction with other educators, and with students.

If you demonstrate gender equality, diversity and inclusion in your classroom, your students' educational experience will be enriched and strengthened. One strategy you can employ is running a gender lens over the classroom dynamics and content delivery.

Four gendered drivers of gender-based violence

1. Condoning of gender-based violence
2. Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life
3. Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity
4. Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.[11]



Apply a gender lens to this scenario

You have only one female student in your plumbing class. She is often left out and you have heard a man in the class mocking her. She is contemplating leaving the course.

What can you do?

Questions	Strategies and tips
Do I encourage active critiquing of gender stereotypes and norms?	▪ Allow time and space in the curriculum for students to critically reflect on gender equality and diversity in their field of study. ▪ Model gender equitable practices by openly challenging sexism in the classroom and in all interactions with students. For example, if you are discussing advertising products or the media you could ask the class to examine how men and women are depicted in advertising and reported in the media. **Resource:** *Media Making Change* website
Do I encourage empowering and non-sexist behaviours among my students?	▪ Ensure that all students (regardless of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, language or learning ability) are equitably included in discussions and participation overall. ▪ Allow time and space for all students to participate. Use a range of mediums to demonstrate the subject content. Put up posters featuring positive role models or materials on gender and racial equality. ▪ Consider the needs of students with learning disability. **Resource:** *Australian Human Rights Commission website*
Do I use respectful and inclusive language in referring to people of all genders and sexualities?	With regard to your own use of language, avoid sexist and racist language in classroom discussions and reflect on your words and the examples that you use in classroom discussions. Recommended terms to use: ▪ **LGBTIQA+** – refers collectively to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer or questioning, and asexual. ▪ Use of **person-first language**: The terms 'people with disabilities' and 'women and girls with disabilities' are consistent with the Australian custom to use 'person-first' language. However, it is recognised and respected that preferred terminology varies between people and communities, and that some prefer 'identity-first' language such as 'disabled woman." ▪ Do not use expressions such as 'suffers from depression', but instead refer to '**people living with depression**'. The acronym 'CALD' should be avoided. Instead, try to be specific about the group you are speaking or writing about. Some examples: migrant and refugee youth, skilled migrants, international students, the Chinese community in Australia. Not being afraid to discuss race is a crucial part of being able to talk about racism and its impacts.
Is the language I use gender neutral and without gender bias?	Gender neutral language is important in reinforcing inclusion for all. Some examples: chairperson, police officer, businessperson, carpenter.

Questions	Strategies and tips
Do I teach in a way that acknowledges the prior skills that mature-aged students bring into the classroom?	Draw on the range of skills and experiences of all students in the classroom. When thinking about the orientation of new students you can explore with them what skills and experiences they bring to their area of study. They may have skills in managing household budgets, coaching sports teams, volunteering with a school reading program, supporting migrants develop English language skills, repairing cars etc.
In what ways do I encourage gender equality of voice and participation? **During discussions, do I inquire as diligently and deeply with female and gender diverse students as I do with male students?**	With students' permission videotape your classes and review your interactions with students. You could also invite a colleague to watch you teach and note which students are being asked questions, and what type of questions. This can help you to: ▪ Provide equal attention, instruction, feedback, and praise to students of all genders, ensuring that everyone receives equal speaking time. ▪ Don't ask students of one gender to perform activities you wouldn't ask of another gender. ▪ Encourage the males in the room to share their feelings, not just their thinking, about topics in class discussions. ▪ Encourage healthy friendships and respectful relationships between all genders.
Do I include women as leaders when teaching about leadership and good practice?	▪ Invite as guest speakers role models who have successfully navigated their way through gender-segregated industries, for example a woman who is a plumber or a man who is an aged care nurse. ▪ You may want to draw on examples of women in senior leadership roles from your industry or from women leaders within your TAFE, for example your CEO may be a woman.
Has my own experience of being a woman, man, or gender-diverse person in my industry affected my career path and progression?	▪ Invite students to critically reflect on gender stereotypes and gender-diverse people's experiences of stereotypes in their chosen profession. ▪ Encourage and support students to be gender equality models and voices in their practical placements, internships and apprenticeships.

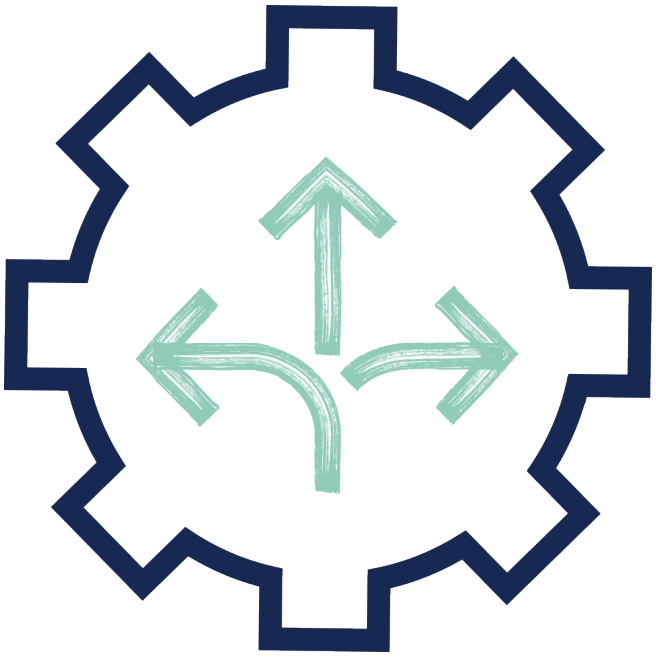
Questions	Strategies and tips
How do I tackle resistance or students who challenge ideas when I talk about gender equality? **For example, how do I currently deal with students' comments which offend, discriminate or harass and which are resistant to change?**	Challenging attitudes and behaviours that lead to gender-based violence will result in some backlash. Backlash or resistance to personal or social change is a normal and expected part of the change process. Develop strategies to manage resistance or backlash in the classroom and be prepared. Monitor classroom dynamics, address any stereotyping and harassment and intervene quickly explaining that the terms are derogatory. You can intervene when you hear students talking about gender stereotypes and encourage them to question and reflect on gender roles and values by asking simple questions. You may hear a man say, "Girls can't do that!" You can say, "Actually they can..." and give examples of women doing it, linking to real life role models/case scenarios. If men are being sexist or disrespectful, then offer alternative voices to show that some men think differently to them. Explain how men who subscribe to sexist attitudes, who favour dominance and control, aggression and suppression of emotions are subject to greater health risks such as higher rates of depression and suicide. To build your skills and confidence in tackling resistance to gender equality consider enrolling in *Safe and Equal's Unpacking Resistance Training*. **Resource:** *The Men's Project website*

Element 3. Practical placements and apprenticeships

Using a gender lens also applies to individuals with practical placement and apprenticeship assessment and co-ordination responsibilities.

TAFE educators, practical placement and trade coordinators, and student liaison officers have unique opportunities to make industry placements more inclusive through demonstrating zero tolerance of behaviours which are disrespectful of women and gender-diverse people, and using a diverse range of teaching strategies, such as creating opportunities for conversation and interpersonal interaction, in addition to hands-on work with equipment and e-learning. Changes such as these are likely to benefit all apprentices.

Supporting inclusive practices and behaviours will also have a powerful impact on business and organisations which take students on placements and apprenticeships.



Apply a gender lens to this scenario

You are coordinating the allocation of electrical trade students to the industry electrical apprenticeships on offer. You have two women electrical trade students in a group of 20 students. You are aware that these students find the male dominated classes difficult and that they often feel isolated.

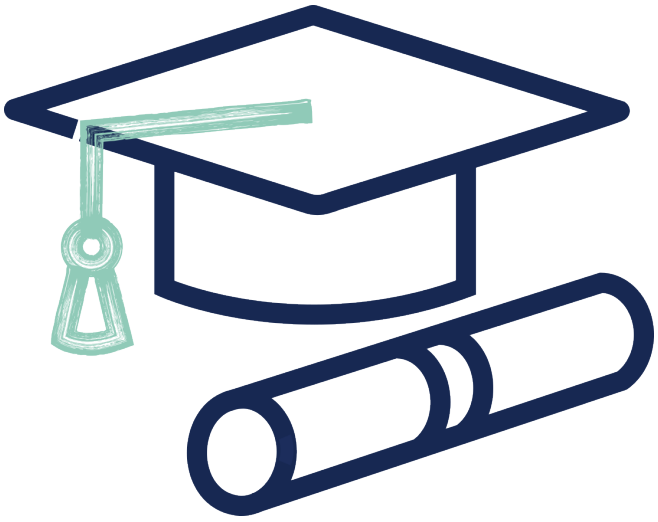
What can you do to ensure that the two female students don't feel isolated during their apprenticeship/placement?

Questions	Strategies and tips
Does the placement contract between your institution and the industry provider include student assessment criteria which are free from gender stereotyping and where the wellbeing of the student is central?	▪ Review the placement contract and, if possible, amend it so that it is gender neutral and gives scope for students to complete assessment tasks in a range of ways e.g., can the building trade placement include alternative ways to do work that may require upper body strength.
Is student selection for industry placements and apprenticeship opportunities inclusive of all students?	▪ Reflect on student selection processes and whether they focus on the attributes and capabilities needed to successfully complete their study and to be job ready at completion, rather than on stereotyped ideas about what a tradesperson or child care worker looks like.
Is the workplace safe and welcoming for all students, regardless of gender? This is particularly important to consider when signing apprenticeship contracts.	▪ Ensure work protocols and equipment are suitable for all apprentices e.g., that apprentices of varying physical types can perform tasks. ▪ Ensure there is provision for appropriate toilets and sanitary bins, including solutions for remote locations. ▪ There are many barriers that gender-diverse people or trans women face in the workforce e.g. filling in forms where there are only two descriptor options: 'man' or 'woman', not having access to gender neutral bathrooms. ▪ Ensure that trade placements provide well-fitting, appropriate uniforms and protective clothing for all employees/apprentices.
Is there willingness to schedule the apprenticeship or practical placement work hours differently to accommodate for caring responsibilities, especially of children?	▪ Explore this opportunity with potential placement and apprenticeship providers.
Is there possible resentment by other workers on site of the presence of tradeswomen? Or of a male child care worker?	▪ Prior to the placement commencing, explore with the placement/ apprenticeship providers how welcoming the workplace will be. Discuss practical ways the supervisor can help create a supportive environment, including reviewing codes of conduct, staff attending anti-discrimination training or revisiting expectations around attitudes and behaviours that show respect in the workplace.
Do I discourage gender stereotypes about both women and men?	▪ Enable and support industry placements of men in women dominated industries such as aged care and child care, and enable and support industry placements for women and gender-diverse in male dominated industries such as construction. ▪ Invite role models as guest speakers and/or mentors into classes in preparation for practical placements and industry apprenticeships. Industry leaders who have successfully navigated their way through gender desegregated industries, e.g. a woman plumber or a man child care worker can provide valuable insights to students commencing industry placements.

Element 4. Assessment

A gender lens is also relevant to assessment and planning. While ensuring the assessment suits the specific needs of learners and meets the competency criteria, the assessment methods can and should incorporate a gender lens.

Students need to be assessed to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge needed to be deemed competent for each subject and, ultimately, the qualification. You have influence via the assessment process to incorporate a gender lens into the design and marking of assessments.



Apply a gender lens to this scenario

When mediating your assessment process for landscape gardening, you identify that some male students are not marked as harshly as the small number of female students.

What can you do?

Questions	Strategies and tips
Where relevant, do I embed critical reflection on gender and diversity into assessment tasks and provide meaningful feedback?	Review the assessment checklist through a gender lens reflecting on what the differences are for men, women and gender-diverse students.
Are the assessment criteria fair and without gender biases?	Support students' learning using various assessment methods: oral, written, spoken/signed, performance, and multi-modal.
Is my assessment method gender neutral and accessible for all students?	Monitor assessment strategies to ensure that they remain valid, reliable, fair, flexible and gender equitable. Review, compare and evaluate the assessment processes, tools and evidence contributing to judgements.
Do I consider gender when I'm formulating and designing assessments in industries where there is traditional gender-segregation?	Validate and encourage students who are working in male- or female-dominated industries and include assessment criteria reflecting on the gendered nature of their work.
Is my assessment valuing diverse understandings and skills e.g., the role of women in history, trades, and the role of men in community services, childcare, and nursing?	Consider designing an assessment that asks students to investigate strategies for succeeding in a work environment where they are in the minority due to their gender, for example in a male- or female-dominated workplace.
In addition to the student demonstrating the essential knowledge required to effectively complete tasks, does the student demonstrate an awareness of the impact of gender in the industry they are entering?	Design an assessment task through which students can demonstrate their understanding of gender in the field they are entering, such as the ratio of men to women, gender diverse people in leadership positions, salary gaps between people of all genders.
Are my assessment strategies reviewed and shared regularly so they are valid, reliable, fair and flexible?	Where there are several assessors working with the same standards in a TAFE, it is a good idea to collect good examples of assessment tasks, instruments and learner responses that can be shared by your peers or co-assessors.
When I'm assessing students in the workplace do I observe unequal power relations between people of different genders?	Provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their own experience of being a man, woman or gender-diverse person in the in the workplace.

Endnotes

1 State of Victoria (Department of Premier and Cabinet). (2016). *Safe and Strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy*.

2 The Association of Women Educators. (2019). What is your gender lens?

3 Our Watch. (2021). *Change the story*, p 30.

4 Our Watch. (2021). *Change the story*.

5 Workplace Gender Equality Agency. (2023). *Australia's Gender Equality Scorecard.*

6 Our Watch. (2023). Respect and Equality: Working together to prevent gender-based violence (National Guide)

7 Our Watch. (2019). Men in focus*: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women*.

8 UNESCO. (2003). UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework (GMIF) for 2002-2007.

9 Our Watch. (2021). *Change the story*, p. 141.

10 Our Watch. (2021). *Change the story*, p. 141.

11 Our Watch. (2021). *Change the story*.

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