

Saints Catholic College

Gender Based Violence Policy



Section 1 - Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles underpinning SCC's commitment to preventing and responding to gender-based harm and violence, and to outline the responsibilities of members of the SCC community.

Section 2 - Overview

- 2.1 This policy establishes a framework to support and enable the prevention of and response to gender-based harm and violence at SCC, reflecting our commitment to creating a safe place for all staff and students where everyone feels included, respected and supported.
- 2.2 The policy defines key concepts such as consent, gender-based harm, gender-based violence, sexual harm, sexual harassment and sexual assault, disclosure and response. Additional explanations and examples for these terms are set out in the corresponding resources.
- 2.3 This policy and its corresponding procedures should be read in conjunction with the SCC policies regarding behavioural standards and conduct listed in Section 7 below. Policies and procedures of James Cook University (JCU) and other third parties may also apply in some circumstances (for example, the policies of industry partners hosting SCC students on placement).
- 2.4 SCC acknowledges that intersectionality can compound the impact of discrimination and that certain groups of people will be more vulnerable to the effects of discrimination and harassment than other groups.

Section 3 - Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all members of the SCC community, including staff, students, volunteers and third parties associated with SCC.
- 3.2 Third parties are in the scope of this policy where there is a connection with SCC such as contractors, licensees or lessees, service providers, visitors, international education agents and delivery partners, and partner organisations in Australia acting for or on behalf of SCC in relation to SCC students and staff.
- 3.3 If gender-based harm and violence is reported outside the scope of this policy, SCC will provide referrals to appropriate support services.
- 3.4 The [Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy](#) takes precedence over this policy to the extent of any inconsistency regarding harm to children or vulnerable adults.

Section 4 - Policy

Principles

- 4.1 Collective commitment: SCC is committed to leading long-term social and cultural change to prevent gender-based harm and violence, recognising the urgent need for action.
- 4.2 Zero tolerance: SCC has zero-tolerance for gender-based harm and violence, supported through leadership accountability, clear policies, and comprehensive education.
- 4.3 Leadership: SCC executives oversee the application of this policy, fostering a safe environment and respectful culture, and ensuring continuous improvement of processes to prevent and respond to gender-based harm and violence.
- 4.4 Confidentiality and privacy: SCC is committed to protecting the confidentiality and privacy of individuals involved in gender-based harm and violence cases, in accordance with the [Diocesan Privacy Policy](#).
- 4.5 Accountability: SCC prohibits the use of its resources for violence, and prioritises safety with support to encourage those who cause harm to seek support.

- 4.6 Procedural Fairness: SCC ensures procedural fairness with impartial and transparent processes where all parties can present their perspectives and evidence reinforcing trust and justice.
- 4.7 Human Rights: SCC views all gender-based harm and violence as unacceptable and a violations of human rights.
- 4.8 Inclusive and intersectional approach: SCC acknowledges that diverse identity aspects, such as race, age, and socio-economic background, influence the support needed for addressing gender-based harm and violence. SCC addresses intersectional needs, ensuring tailored support and interventions.
- 4.9 Trauma-informed: SCC adopts a rights-based, victim centric approach, prioritising safety and wellbeing and ensuring victims voices and needs guide all support efforts, fostering an environment of compassion and respect.
- 4.10 Transparency and integrity: SCC maintains evidence-based policies and procedures aligned to best practices, protecting against victimisation and supporting those who disclose or report harms.
- 4.11 Preventing harm: SCC has a dedicated pastoral care team and work in partnership with James Cook University (JCU) Respect Program Staff who lead all work associated with the prevention of gender-based harm and violence, sexual harassment and sexual assault, focused on governance, awareness, learning, and innovative projects.
- 4.12 Dedicated and supportive response: SCC has a dedicated pastoral care team and works in partnership with the JCU Respect Program staff who provide a dedicated response service for students and staff to seek support for gender-based harm and violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or any concerning, unwanted, uncomfortable and/or threatening behaviour.

Responsibilities

- 4.13 All members of the SCC community are required to:
 - a. role model accountable and appropriate behaviour in line with the standards outlined in the SCC Code of Conduct and the SCC Handbook.
 - b. promote respectful culture and practice within their sphere of influence.
 - c. increase awareness and ensure compliance with relevant policies and procedures.
 - d. undertake and complete all mandatory a training and awareness raising to develop skills necessary to support a respectful, safe, and inclusive community.
 - e. comply with reporting and record keeping obligations, as required.
- 4.14 The SCC Council and the SCC Executive Team are responsible for providing a safe, non-violent, gender equal and inclusive environment for all members of the SCC community.
- 4.15 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), is the central authority for the implementation of this policy and ensuring there is a clear reporting line through committees, college council, executive bodies, and effective management and oversight by senior management.
- 4.16 The CEO regularly examines de-identified data to identify trends and systemic issues and enable SCC to identify opportunities for improvements and implement changes where required.
- 4.17 The CEO provides formal reports and any disciplinary or investigation actions data to the Council.
- 4.18 The CEO is responsible for providing opportunities for the College Council, Staff & Student Leaders to receive education and training about the principles in this policy to supplement the mandatory training (JCU Respect), and taking prompt action where needed in accordance with the procedures under this policy.
- 4.19 The CEO is responsible for ensuring the Colleges adherence to the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025.

Section 5 - Compliance

- 5.1 Reports of non-compliance with this policy should be made immediately to the CEO and in turn to the College Council.

5.2 A breach of this policy or corresponding procedures may result in disciplinary action. Depending on the nature and impact of the breach, other actions may also be instigated. Alleged or actual conduct by staff or students that constitutes gender-based harm or violence will be handled in accordance with the Code of Conduct, Safe Working Policy, Safeguarding Policy or Student Handbook, as applicable.

- 5.3 This policy supports SCC’s compliance obligations regarding:
- a. [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#)
 - b. [Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 \(Qld\)](#)
 - c. [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)
 - d. [Respect at Work and Other Matters Amendment Act 2024](#)
 - e. [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010](#)
 - f. [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
 - g. [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011](#)
 - h. [Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024](#)
 - i. [Fair Work Act 2009](#)
 - j. [Fair Work Regulations 2009](#)

- 5.4 This policy supports SCC’s commitment to adhering to sector best practices and is informed by:
- a. [Australia Human Rights Commission – Guidelines for Complying with the Positive Duty under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Cth\) \(AHRC\)](#)
 - b. [National Plan for Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education 2024](#)
 - c. [JCU Annual Respect Reports & Action Plans.](#)

Section 6 - Other Relevant Policies

- 6.1 SCC policies regarding behavioural standards and conduct that are relevant to this policy include:
- a. [Student Handbook](#)
 - b. Code of Conduct
 - c. [Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy](#)
 - d. Safe Work Policy
 - e. SCC Work Health Safety and Environment Policy

Section 7 - Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|-----------------------|---|
| Child | An individual under the age of 18 years. |
| Concern | An expression of dissatisfaction with the behaviour of a student or staff member, where a response is not expected. |
| Consent | As defined in Criminal Code 1899 (s 348) and the Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024. |
| Disclosure | Where a person first makes known an incident of gender-based or other form of harm to SCC or JCU (e.g., by telling another student or staff member, or JCU Respect Team). This may or may not lead to a report being made. |
| Gender-based violence | Any form of physical or non-physical violence, harassment, abuse or threats based on gender that results in or is likely to result in harm, coercion, control, fear, or deprivation of liberty or autonomy. Violence and harm can be physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual, financial and technology-facilitated abuse (including image-based abuse), and stalking. |

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| Intersectionality | <p>The ways in which different aspects of a person’s identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation. Intersectionality addresses and acknowledges gender, sexual orientation, Indigeneity, race, economic status, ability, or other factors can compound the impact of gender-based violence, resulting in certain groups of people being more vulnerable and/or disproportionately impacted than other groups to the effects of gender-based harm, violence, discrimination and harassment.</p> |
| Sexual Assault | <p>Is when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. a person (A) intentionally touches another person (B) and the touching is sexual ii. person (B) who was touched did not agree or consent to the touching, and iii. person (A) did not reasonably believe that person (B) consented. <p>If person (A) knew that (B) was not consenting, this will be sexual assault; and if person (A) did not believe on reasonable grounds that B was consenting, this will also be sexual assault.</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy, SCC also includes the following acts defined in the Criminal Code Act 1899 and the Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024</p> |
| Sexual exploitation and abuse | <p>Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes. It includes profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from sexual exploitation of another. The abuse may be actual or threatened intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions, and includes but is not limited to sexual assault, sexual harm and sexual harassment. Technology-facilitated sexual exploitation and abuse is the use of technology and new media to facilitate sex-based abuse and harassment. Behaviours can include nonconsensual pornography (“revenge porn”), recorded sexual assaults, deepfakes, sextortion, cyber harassment, cyber dating violence, and cyberstalking.</p> |
| Sexual harm | <p>Non-consensual behaviour of a sexual nature that causes a person to feel uncomfortable, frightened, distressed, intimidated, or harmed, either physically or psychologically. Sexual harm includes behaviour that also constitutes sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape.</p> |
| Sexual harassment | <p>When a person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) makes an unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, or (b) engages in other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to a person, in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated. |
| Third parties | <p>Any person or entity external or separate to SCC, including contractors, consultants, volunteers, visiting appointees and visitors as well as members of the public.</p> |
| Trauma informed | <p>A strengths-based framework that applies the core principles of safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration for shared decision-making, empowerment and respect for diversity.</p> <p>Trauma-informed services recognise the physiological, emotional, psychological and neurological effects of trauma; minimise the risk of re-traumatisation and promote healing; emphasise physical and emotional safety; and focus on the whole context in which a service is provided – not just on what is provided.</p> |

Section 8 – Monitoring & Review

8.1 The policy owner has responsibility to review the Policy to ensure it is compliant with the College goals, relative legislation and social practices at least every four (4) years

Section 9 – Date of Next Review

9.1 March 2026

Section 10 – Version History

| Version Number | Enacted Date | Comments |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 2026-2 | 26 th February 2026 | To Be Reviewed by Key Stakeholders by 31 st March 2026 |

Policy Owner: Head of College

Consultation with Key Stakeholders: No

Policy Validated: Head of College

Authorised By:



26th February 2026

Signed:

Date:

Ty Goulter
Head of College