

Union seeks member input for submission to national inquiry

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Sexual harassment and gendered violence is under-reported, especially in schools. Everyone should be able to go to work in a safe environment, free of harassment and violence, and to achieve this we need to expose what is happening in workplaces so our lawmakers get the full picture.

Delegates at Federation's December Council meeting voted to "change the rules on gendered violence".

Federation will make a submission to the Australian Human Rights Commission National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces. The submission will seek changes regarding the work of agencies such as Fair Work, the NSW Industrial Commission, the Australian Human Rights Commission, NSW Anti-Discrimination Board and the relevant legislative framework.

This will include more qualified personnel, training, codes of practice as well as the power and resources to require companies, government departments and agencies to report on the measures they adopt to prevent, respond to and monitor sexual/gender-based harassment in the workplace.



The AHRC conducted a survey earlier this year that found 85 per cent of women and 57 per cent of men reported they had been sexually harassed at some point in their lives.

They also found that 23 per cent of women and 16 per cent of men reported they were sexually harassed in the past 12 months and only 17 per cent of those who reported they had been sexually harassed had made a formal complaint.

These findings show the current rules aimed at preventing and addressing sexual harassment in the workplace are clearly broken.

The Australian Education Union (AEU) federal office has developed a member survey to assist us to make a comprehensive submission to the inquiry. This survey is for principals, teachers and support staff who have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment in their workplace.

The AEU nationwide Sexual Harassment Survey is open until 15 December.

The survey can be [accessed here](#).

Federation will utilise the findings of the Australian Human Rights Commission National Inquiry into Sexual

Harassment in Australian Workplaces to pursue the need for public education employers to provide more effective guidance and support in relation to identifying, preventing and effectively responding to sexual and/or gender-based harassment in relation to staff and students in schools, TAFE and other education workplaces.

— Leeanda Smith, Women's Coordinator