

NTEU

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# SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE



**National Tertiary  
Education Union**  
Let's aim higher

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2023

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# A NOTE ON THE 2023 SURVEY

The survey questions were patterned after:

1. NTEU Survey on Sexual Harassment and Sexism in the Workplace (2018)
2. AHRC Fifth National Survey on Sexual Harassment in Australian workplaces (2022). Survey Report available [here](#)
3. ACTU Survey on Sexual harassment in Australian Workplaces (2018). Survey Report available [here](#)
4. NTEU Survey on Student Assessment of Teaching Surveys (2018)
5. National Park Service Work Environment Survey featured in Technical Report, National Park Service (NPS) Work Environment Survey, (2017) Survey Report available [here](#)

This paper outlines the preliminary findings of the NTEU survey, with an Executive summary providing an overview of the results followed by further analysis of the data.

**This paper is produced by the NTEU Policy and Research Unit.**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than 2000 NTEU members participated in their Union's second national survey on sexual harassment, sexism, and gender-based bias in a tertiary education workplace between 22 August and 1 September 2023. This survey is a follow up to our first national survey, undertaken in 2018, which had a similar level of engagement.

A workplace should be a safe place for workers. However, the findings of this survey show that many NTEU members, predominantly women, experience discrimination, harassment or violence in their workplace and that sexual harassment continues to be persistent and widespread across the tertiary education sector.

The findings of this survey also highlight the need to ensure that every tertiary education workplace has the appropriate mechanisms in place to protect workers from sexual harassment, sexism and gender-bias by providing clear access to workplace health and safety processes. These mechanisms should include an education program for all staff in preventative measures, clear workplace policies, an effective and timely complaints process that ensures appropriate investigation and a just remedy, and a stronger role for the union in the workplace.

It is disappointing that there were no improvements on sexual harassment made in contrast to the first survey. The preliminary results of this survey largely echo the findings of the NTEU's 2018, although in some instances are worse.

While the NTEU's first survey revealed that nearly two in ten respondents (19%) who completed the survey had personally experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, with more than twice as many women (25%) as men (10%) and 15% non-binary people reporting personal incidents, the second survey found this had grown to nearly three in ten respondents (29%), still with higher levels for women (38%) women compared to men (14%) and 33% of non-binary people reporting personal incidents.

Similarly, while the first survey found that over one third (36%) of all respondents who completed the survey indicated that they were aware of others who had been sexually harassed in their workplaces, the second survey saw a considerable increase, to just over half of respondents (50%).

Respondents to the survey were provided with the opportunity to make additional comments to contextualise their responses and to provide them with an opportunity to share their experiences (if they felt comfortable). The following accounts have been de-identified but are provided to highlight the personal impact of sexual harassment, sexism and gender bias, which underpin the statistics.

In their comments, the respondents identified workplace cultures, sexist and gendered attitudes and patterns of behaviour that have allowed sexual harassment to continue unabated in our tertiary education institutions. These include experiences where complaints were treated with scepticism or belittled, where perpetrator behaviours were minimalised, where victims were isolated and left in the dark as to the outcomes of their complaints, and where both managements and bystanders ignored issues.

The evidence shows that sexual harassment, sexism, and gender-based bias in tertiary education workplaces continues to be largely ignored and as a result remains firmly entrenched in our universities. Recent changes to federal and state legislation have strengthened the legal obligations for tertiary education employers to ensure that the spaces in which staff work and in which students study are safe. Unfortunately, this is clearly not reflected in the findings of this survey.

The NTEU maintains that sexual harassment in the workplace is a clear psychosocial risk and as such must be addressed as a workplace health and safety issue. The concerning findings of this survey only serve to underline the urgency of the need for change.

# A SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Of the 2092 responses received from NTEU members, 831 (40%) were complete responses. The data used in these preliminary findings is extracted from the 831 respondents who completed the survey, and specifically, from the 241 (29%) respondents who had personally experienced sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace.

## **Personal experience of sexual harassment**

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Nearly one third (29%) of those who completed the survey said that they had a personal experience of sexual harassment while half (50%) were also aware of others who have been sexually harassed.

Of those who completed the survey, 38% of the women, 14% of the men and 33% of non-binary people said they had a personal experience of sexual harassment.

Of the 241 who had a personal experience of sexual harassment, 77% were women, 17% were men, 5% were non-binary people, and 1% preferred not to say.

The data which follows is extracted from these 241 (29%) of respondents.

Respondents were subjected to a range of behaviours, including unwelcome and inappropriate sexually suggestive comments, jokes (76%), intrusive questions about their private life or appearance (67%), inappropriate staring or leering (61%), unwelcome touching, hugging, kissing or cornering (55%), being followed and watched (37%), indecent exposure (14%), request or pressure for sex (13%), threatened with retaliation for not cooperating sexually (9%) and either attempted or actual sexual assault (9%).

Respondents who had personally experienced sexual harassment, were harassed by mainly by co-workers (41%), by a manager in a senior position to them (34%) or by students (29%).

In discussing personal experiences of sexual harassment, respondents shared the following comments:

*Female respondent: 'I was harassed and abused by a senior co-worker on the phone, in lifts and through malicious gossip. This was due to being a whistleblower (calling out his misconduct).'*

Female respondent: *'Someone has sent me 75+ emails telling me they love me. They seem to think we are in a relationship.'*

Male respondent: *'I received regular phone calls – aggressive and sexually explicit – from an anonymous male student for the whole of my first semester lecturing.'*

Female respondent: *'A co-worker (permanent staff versus me who is a casual) during work hours and in the workplace, tried to show me a video of a well-known right-wing misogynist. When I said "No, I don't want to see that", he advanced closer to me, holding up his phone towards me with the video playing. I put up my outstretched hand to block it and again said "No".'*

Female respondent: *'Sexist and homophobic jokes told at formal university functions (during talks/presentations), use of objectifying images (i.e. the "woman in the hat" from Playboy magazine) in talks. Since transitioning as a binary trans woman, I feel less respected and listened to, often talked over and my expertise is devalued.'*

Female respondent: *'Manager was insecure and sexist, but only towards women who are assertive or disagree with him. If you were the nice compliant type of female, then you get along with him just fine.'*

Most respondents (63%) of those who completed the survey said the behaviour occurred occasionally, while 13% said it occurred regularly.

The survey responses also indicated how covert sexual harassment can be and that it can also occur in informal settings and off-campus such as university events and conferences.

Female respondent: *'A senior male colleague, at a conference, cornered me and intruded on my personal space, making me feel uncomfortable while mentioning his newly single status and paying intense attention to me.'*

Female respondent: *'I once had a visiting scholar at post-seminar drinks on campus ask about my ethnicity and proceed to comment on how 'feisty and hot' women of my ethnicity were.'*

Several respondents also said how training regarding different forms of harassment tend to focus on examples that are obvious and overt and this allows a harassment to continue.

Female respondent: *'This makes it difficult for people to identify more covert behaviours and know how to deal with them - leading to hesitation and doubt on the part of victims.'*

Female respondent: *'Complete lack of awareness – a complainant said, “needs to grow a spine, needs to learn to take a joke, needs to stop being so soft”.'*

Non-binary respondent: *'Academia has a lot of structural elements that allow sexual harassment including lack of oversight of academic staff management of professional and junior staff in often very stressful and unique work environments as well as lack of training of academic staff on their responsibilities to those they work with as people in positions of power and how to manage that responsibility and accountability in a safe and meaningful way.'*

Male respondent: *'The university does not care about the underlying issues. They care more about resolving the acute problem and do not address the underlying causes so that prevention of future episodes is addressed.'*

## **Reporting sexual harassment**

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When it came to reporting sexual harassment, 46% of those who experienced sexual harassment made no complaint at all. Only 13% made a formal complaint and 24% made an informal complaint.

Respondents to the survey shared their experiences of reporting, both officially and informally:

Female respondent: *'Complete failure of management and senior staff to listen or act. Policies, procedures and public statements are lip service only.'*

Female respondent: *'As a former student and now staff, we receive more disclosures than any university reporting system. This isn't easy and we do not have the resources to support our colleagues or students if they do not want to report or go through university services for support because of mistrust in the way reports are handled.'*

Non-binary respondent: *'I was completely disillusioned by the whole process. I was once a person who believed in sexual harassment policies and the people in organisations in place to help staff, but I now know from first-*



*hand experience that universities, senior leaders, and HR and Diversity teams have an inbuilt system to silence accusers and shuffle around abusers. There was no attempt to corroborate the victims experience when there was ample opportunity to do so. I would never again encourage a colleague to report an incident as they bear all the harm. The only advice I would give again is to get away from the abuser, even if that means an impact on career, because in the end, the damage to mental health of staying or seeing an abuser not punished, is much worse for a career long term anyway.'*

*Female respondent: 'I don't think that staff and students have confidence in the University to manage these issues – there are policies, procedures, networks, committees, training, bystander programs - and even though we have more female students and staff - the culture at the University doesn't believe or value women.'*

The four most common reasons given for not reporting were that they didn't think anything would be done (59%), they didn't trust the complaint process (51%), they thought people might think they were overreacting (51%) they feared it might hurt their career (46%). Over one third of those who did make a complaint, made it to their Head of School (38%) or to Human Resources (34%). The majority were dissatisfied with all aspects of their institution's complaints process. When commenting of the outcome of their complaint, 52% were encouraged to drop the issue, 48% said no action was taken, 45% were labelled a troublemaker and 44% reported negative consequences for them from their employer, including denial of promotion, transfer, reassignment to less favourable work, and/or scheduling changes.

Respondents commented that:

*Female respondent: 'There is no communication between different levels Management/Governance when issues/problems are raised. The process is for complete "cut-off" of communication – via phone and email. One is treated as a pariah.'*

*Female respondent: 'It was made very clear to me that making a complaint was unwelcome, and that it would reflect badly on the school.'*

*Female respondent: 'After the complaint was made, nothing was followed up and I was never made aware of whether or not the person involved was spoken to or anything - it was just never mentioned again.'*

Non-binary respondent: *'The complaint goes in and then you hear nothing. It just kind of disappears and you wonder if they even got the message in the first place. Nothing happens and when you try to follow up in person you are told "Yeah it's been handled" and that's about it.'*

Female respondent: *'I had to ask a senior woman about the process and she directed me. The information was not easily accessible or clearly available. The outcome was that frustratingly little was done.'*

Female respondent: *'We need better means of acting on complaints to physically protect staff from aggressive students. I feel vulnerable in my office, with no way to stop students from entering. I have been bailed up before by students, but no one has responded to my ongoing fear of students.'*

Female respondent: *'When I spoke to my colleagues about my experiences confidentially, I was told to 'grin and bear it' and not to rock the boat, otherwise things will turn out badly for me.'*

Male respondent: *'Agreeing with management is best way to avoid issues – environment is such that don't want to be seen as negative or resistant.'*

Female respondent: *'There is always the threat of action by supervisors against those that speak up against harassment and sexism including a lack of support for addressing this.'*

Female respondent: *'I was absolutely ignored and left feeling unsafe in the workplace. I still struggle to be at work.'*

## **Intersectional harassment**

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The survey also asked questions related to intersectional harassment – for example, harassment that relates to race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity). This behaviour may include both unwanted sexual attention/sexual coercion or crude, offensive, or hostile behaviours.

Gender-based harassment was a striking feature of this survey, with a majority (74%) of those who experienced sexual harassment identifying their gender as the basis upon which they had other negative experiences such as feeling marginalised and disempowered.

Respondents observed that:

Female respondent: *'A male questioning a management decision is considered a good leader/ critical thinker, whereas a female making the same comments is considered aggressive/bossy/a "bitch".'*

Female respondent: *'Hiring decisions involving discussions on the age of female staff and the perceived likelihood of female applicants becoming pregnant and then taking maternity leave, resulting in male staff being preferred.'*

Other factors included age (37%) both regarding being young and being old. Respondents shared their experience of this, stating that:

Female respondent: *'I had my age ('young') brought up as a concern during an interview for a management position. I am 29.'*

Female respondent: *'As a young woman, I find that senior staff (especially elder white males) think differently of how women and men can contribute to research. Women are asked to contribute in terms of proof-reading or writing, whereas the men are asked to contribute more substantially (e.g., analysis), and then recognized more for doing these tasks (e.g., being included towards the top of the authorship order). Speaking up also has resulted in fewer invitations to collaborate on research projects.'*

Female respondent: *'Older females are often experiencing discouragement for advancing their careers and seeking promotions in the tertiary workplace. I was told by a head of faculty that I was "too old to run a research centre". I was not the only female he had made such statements to. The university took NO action. I left the university in question.'*

Female respondent: *'Ageism / lack of awareness around menopause and its impact on some employees. My health has been severely impacted and there are no allowances made for this outside of the standard sick leave, which I use up quickly. It is simply sexist.'*

Race or ethnicity (13%) was another factor, with respondents commenting:

Female respondent: *'Strong competition between the forces of western-white governance and First Nations or even 'balanced' governance structure ensures ongoing racist distribution of powers in current structure - Another Day in the Colony.'*

Female respondent: *'The lack of ability to speak English eloquently apparently affects how people treat you in a working environment, it can lead to racist behaviours, which at some points may also lead to harassment.'*

As was gender identity (12%).

Non-binary respondent: *'I've had a manager choose new staff and their cultural needs over LGBTQI+ staff, including rolling back inclusion practices like respecting pronouns and peoples' gender and sexuality. Which led to Queer staff acting straighter at work, monitoring pronouns of partners and people they're interested in, and dressing more conservatively.'*

Non-binary respondent: *'I often feel that I cannot indeed be myself. This is evident in multiple ways: Lack of Value for My Opinions: My views are consistently overlooked, making me feel as though they hold little to no significance.'*

Behaviours that made respondents feel marginalised and disempowered included being talked over by others when participating in work meetings, events or activities (83%), having their views routinely dismissed (64%), being denied opportunities for promotion (58%), being discouraged to apply for career progression (43%), having their contributions were regularly criticised or downplayed (27%). Respondents experienced these behaviours several times, some, more than 10 times. When asked specifically about gender-based harassment most said they were harassed mainly by coworkers (52%), managers (33%) and students (22%) and that the majority (75%) were men. One respondent succinctly summed up their experience of these behaviours, stating that:

Female respondent: *'At academic conferences with senior male academics from other institutions who repeatedly come up to me and other young women and interrupt our conversations at networking times and ask personal and inappropriate questions. I have also experienced male academics talking during my presentation, making dismissive comments and generally making me feel unwelcome in a conference environment because I'm a young woman.'*

When asked about opportunities for advancement, nearly half said that they were denied such opportunities, 34% said they were discouraged from applying and 30% said they were

passed over for promotion on gender grounds. A small number (4%) said they were forced to withdraw their application, commenting that:

Female respondent: *'I was unable to apply for several promotion opportunities due to my desire to remain part-time, three days per week (due to family commitments).'*

Female respondent: *'My commitment as a mother to balancing work with the needs of my children, means I'm not seen as serious or ambitious in the workplace, even though I perform very well and believe I would otherwise be given the opportunity for promotion. I feel part-time employees (most often women), are seen as less valuable and committed, despite the reality that they often work more strategically and efficiently than their full-time colleagues.'*

Female respondent: *'I have been discouraged from opportunities on the basis of being a single parent.'*

## **Level of satisfaction with the job and the workplace**

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When asked about how satisfied they feel with their job and workplace, the majority of those who experienced sexual harassment were satisfied with the kind of work they do (63%), their co-workers (60%) and job security (56%) but were extremely dissatisfied with their workload (70%). Regarding their specific experience of empowerment, 63% felt they were respected by coworkers and 51% said their supervisors cared but only 30% felt they were able to speak out.

The culture of “don’t talk, don’t ask” in relation to sexual harassment was evident in a number of comments:

Male respondent: *'In the current climate, where many others around are losing their jobs, there is a sense that problems must be ignored or your position be brought into question.'*

Female respondent: *'There are supervisors and co-workers that I have excellent, respectful and collegial relationships with, but there are a number of problematic co-workers. Code of conduct and respectful relationships are often spoken about, but when problems arise they don't seem to be tackled head on and behaviour is often not accurately named, and excuses are often made on behalf of the trouble maker.'*

Male respondent: *'Colleagues at my own level have always been supportive of each other. However, individuals in senior management roles display extreme levels of callousness, and openly treat employees as inanimate profit-making machines to benefit the university's bottom line. Senior management's statements on employee wellbeing are little more than public relations stunts, intended to cover their own backsides in the event of litigation.'*

Female respondent: *'In workload allocations the emotional labour of keeping departments running is never calculated but almost always falls to women.'*

## **Witnessing harassment**

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Bystander behaviour is also important to note. Of those who reported a personal experience of sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace, 39% said that someone else had witnessed that harassment and most (41%) ignored it, some (35%) offered emotional support and only 7% intervened. Alarming, 11% of bystanders, escalated the harassment, while only 5% reported it to the employer and only 4% talked to the harasser. Some (14%) of those who reported a personal experience of sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace had witnessed someone else being subjected to sexual harassment. The majority offered emotional support (52%) and talked to the person about what to do (50%), one quarter (23%) intervened, while only 17% reported it to the employer and 6% talked to the harasser.

Respondents commented on their experience of bystander behaviour:

Female respondent: *'The male dominated nature of trades base units i.e. electrical, engineering and building/plumbing studies can lead to an uncomfortable situation for female professional staff. ... Multiple times, I have witnessed a toxic environment where grown adult men will have pack mentality and make a comment to get a laugh with their fellow students/teachers at a colleague or my cost.'*

Female respondent: *'They would pretend they needed me for a task to help usher me away from the person who was regularly bothering me.'*

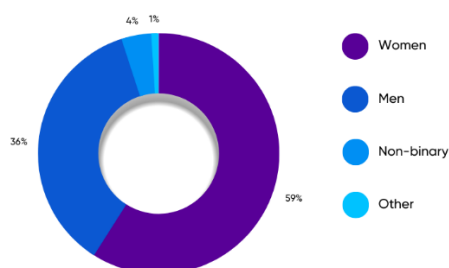
# PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

## Survey participants

More than 2000 NTEU members who participated in the survey between 22 August and 1 September 2023. Of the 2092 responses, 831 (40%) were complete responses of which 59% were women, 36% men and 4% non-binary.

Composition of survey participants who completed the survey

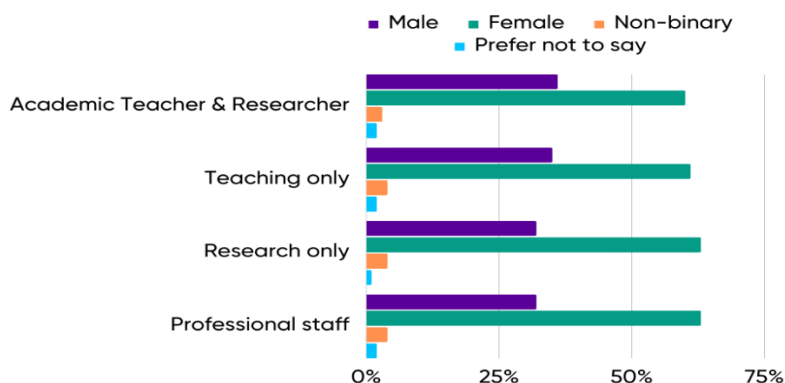
### SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



Of the 831 respondents who completed the survey 42% were academic teaching and research staff, 38% were professional staff, 11% were teaching only staff and 9% were research only staff. Most staff in each work designation are women.

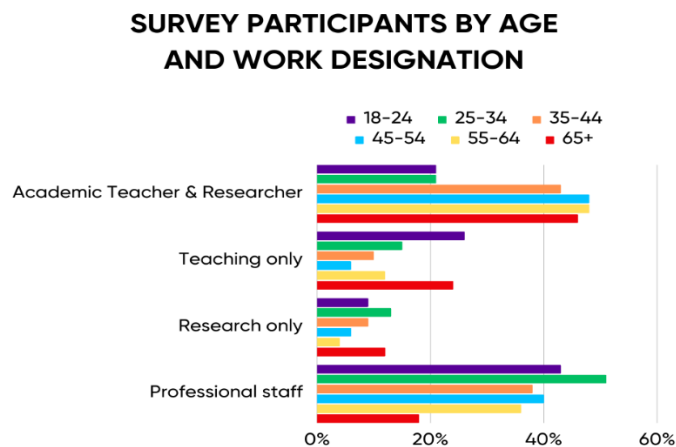
Composition of survey participants who completed the survey by gender and work designation

### SURVEY PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER AND WORK DESIGNATION



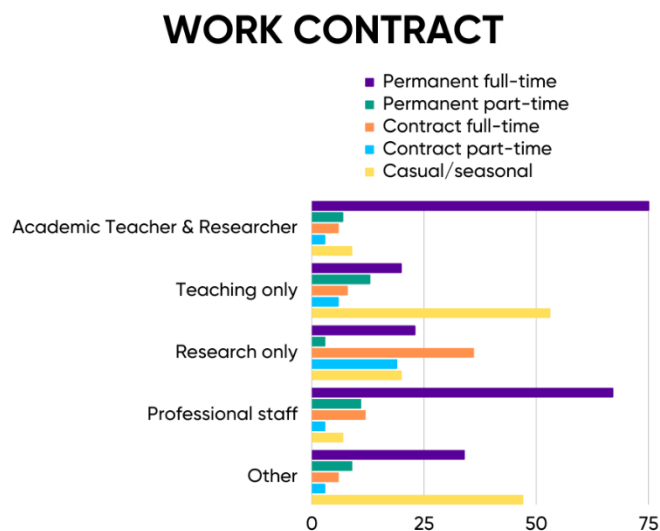
Of the 831 respondents who completed the survey, three quarters were aged between 35 and 64 with 25% in each of the three age categories: 35-44, 45-54 and 55-64. Nearly half in each of these three categories are academic teaching and research staff. Younger staff in the 18-24 and 25-24 age categories work mainly as professional staff, while over one quarter of 18–24-year-olds are working as teaching only staff. In the 65+ age category nearly half are academic teaching and research staff.

Composition of survey participants who completed the survey by age and work designation



The majority (75%) of academic teaching and research staff are employed as permanent full-time staff, as are the majority of professional staff (67%). Whereas most teaching only staff (53%) are employed as casual/sessional staff.

Composition of survey participants by work contract and work designation



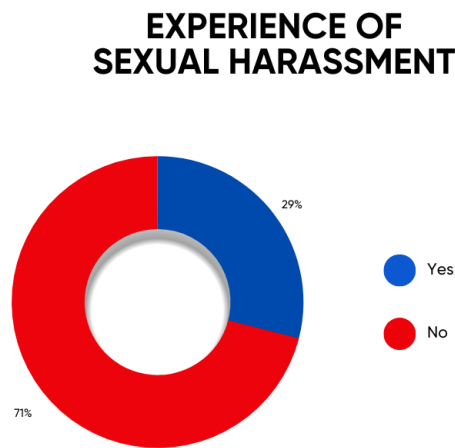


## Personal experience of sexual harassment

Nearly one third of the 831 who completed the survey (29% - 241) said that they had a personal experience of sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace.

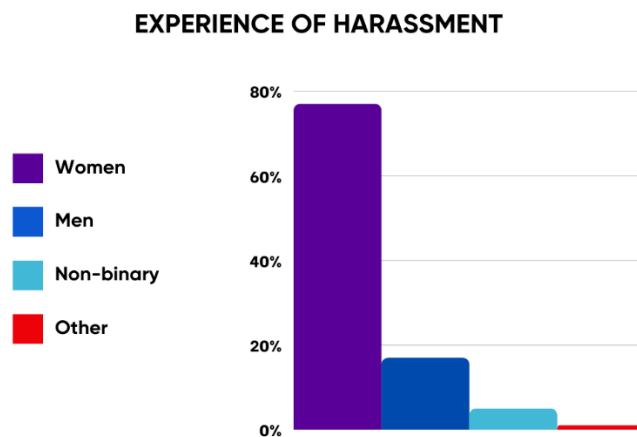
**NOTE:** The data which follows is extracted from these 241 respondents.

Composition of survey participants who completed the survey and who had a personal experience of sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace



Of the 241 who had a personal experience of sexual harassment, 77% were women, 17% men, 5% non-binary.

Gender of the survey participants with personal experience of sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace



## Forms of sexual harassment

Over three quarters (76%) of 241 respondents who had a personal experience of sexual harassment, experienced the following forms of harassment: sexually suggestive comments and jokes that made them feel offended.

More than half experienced the following behaviours that made them feel uncomfortable: intrusive questions (67%), staring or leering that made them feel intimidated (61%), and unwelcome and inappropriate touching and physical contact (55%). An alarming 9% had experienced attempted or actual sexual assault.

Percentage (%) of survey participants who had a personal experience of sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace and how this experience affected them

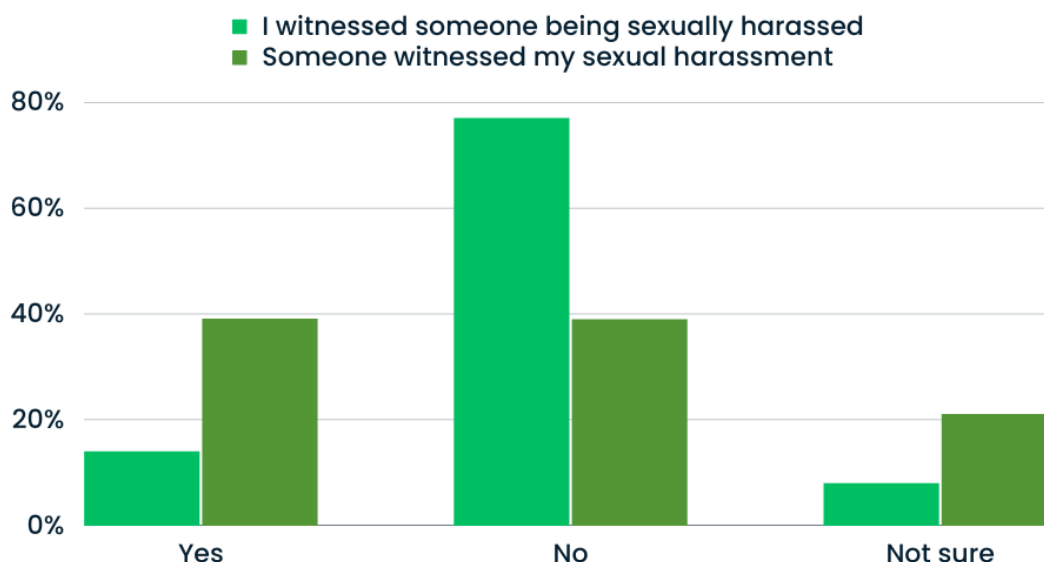
Forms of sexual harassment that made respondents feel offended, intimidated, or threatened	%
Sexually suggestive comments, jokes	76%
Intrusive questions about private life or appearance	67%
Inappropriate staring, leering	61%
Unwelcome touching, hugging, kissing, cornering	55%
Inappropriate physical contact	44%
Being followed, watched or having someone loitering nearby	37%
Repeated or inappropriate invitations to go out on dates	32%
Sexually suggestive or explicit texts, emails or messages via social media	20%
Sexual gestures, indecent exposure, inappropriate display of the body	14%
Requests or pressure for sex and other sexual acts	13%
Actual or attempted sexual assault	9%
Made to feel threatened with retaliation for not cooperating sexually	9%
Offer incentives/bribes to engage in sexual behaviour	6%
Any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature	22%

## Witnessing harassment

Of those who reported a personal experience of sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace, 39% said that someone else had witnessed that harassment. Some (14%) of those who reported a personal experience of sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace had also witnessed someone else being subjected to sexual harassment.

Composition of respondents who have either witnessed someone else being sexually harassed or had someone witness their sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace

### PERCENTAGE (%) OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE WITNESSED SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

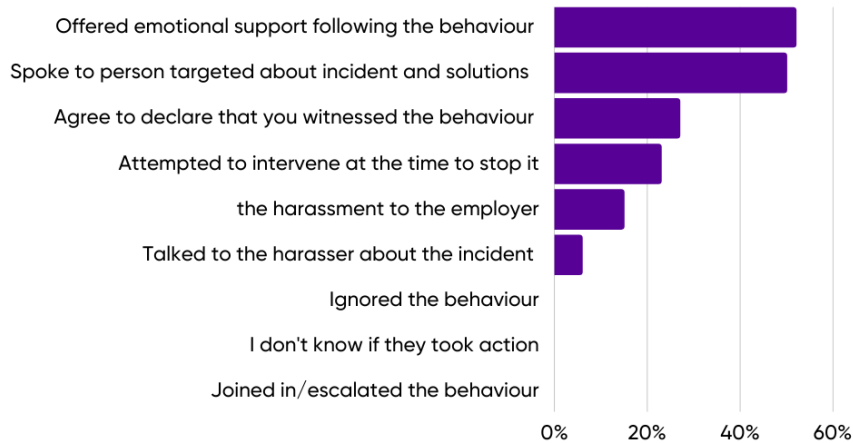


Over one quarter (21%) and an additional (8%) said they were unsure whether they'd witnessed harassment. This may indicate a need for greater awareness and education around what harassment is.

When witnessing someone else being sexually harassed, most respondents said they offered emotional support (52%), talked to the person about what to do (50%). One quarter (23%) said they intervened, while only 17% reported it to the employer and 6% talked directly to the harasser. None of the respondents said they ignored the behaviour or joined in/escalated the behaviour.

Composition of action taken by respondents who witnessed someone else being sexually harassed

**ACTION I TOOK WHEN I WITNESSED SOMEONE BEING SEXUALLY HARASSED**



However, respondents who reported a personal experience of sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace and said that someone else had witnessed that harassment, offered a different story of the action taken by those witness(es). Respondents in this context said that 41% ignored it, 35% offered emotional support and only 7% intervened. Alarmingly, 11% of bystanders, joined in/escalated the harassment, while only 5% reported it to the employer and only 4% talked to the harasser.

Composition of action taken by bystanders who witnessed the respondent being sexually harassed

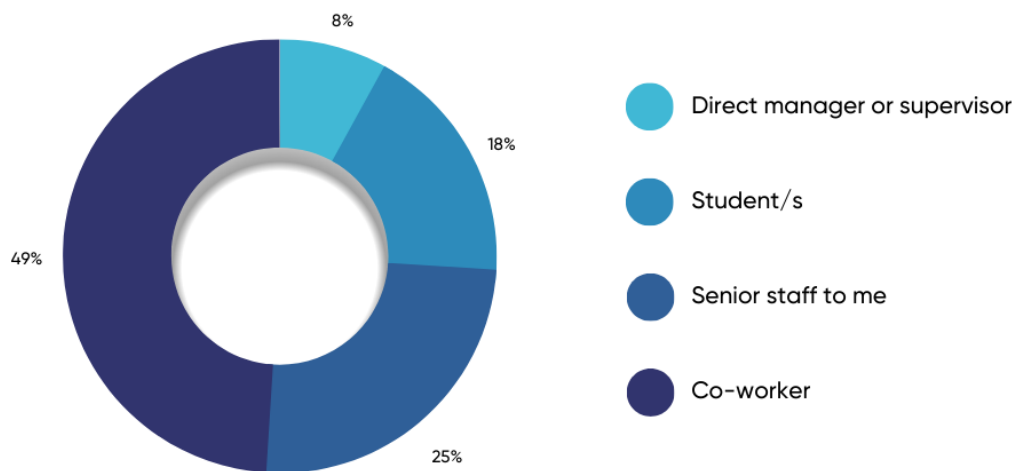
**ACTION OTHERS TOOK WHEN THEY WITNESSED MY SEXUAL HARASSMENT**



Nearly three quarters of respondents who have either witnessed someone else being sexually harassed or had someone witness their sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace, identified the witness(es) as a co-worker (49%) or a co-worker in a more senior position to them (25%). Nearly one fifth of respondents identified the witness(es) as students (18%) and 8% as their direct manager or supervisor.

**Composition of people as identified by survey participants who witnessed a person being sexually harassed**

### PERSON/S WHO WITNESSED THE HARASSMENT



## Reporting harassment

Almost half (46%) of the respondents who experienced sexual harassment did NOT pursue a complaint against their harasser.

Only 13% made a formal complaint and 24% made an informal complaint.

When it came to reporting sexual harassment, over one third of those who did make a complaint, made it to their Head of School (38%) or to Human Resources (34%).

The four most common reasons given for not reporting were that they didn't think anything would be done (59%), they didn't trust the complaint process (51%), they thought people might think they were overreacting (51%), and they feared it might hurt their career (46%).

Percentage (%) of the 241 survey participants and their reason for not making a complaint

Reason for not making a complaint	%
I did not think anything would be done.	59%
I thought people would think I was over-reacting.	51%
I did not trust the complaint and resolution process.	51%
I thought it might hurt my career.	46%
I thought that the person who did it would get away with it.	43%
I did not think it was serious enough.	33%
I feared losing my job.	32%
I did not think I would be believed.	30%
I wanted to forget about it and move on.	23%
I was ashamed or embarrassed.	20%
I confronted the person myself.	17%
The behaviour or misconduct stopped on its own	15%
I did not know how to file a complaint.	15%
I did not want anyone else to know.	14%
I thought others might say I was 'inviting' sexual harassment	7%
I was concerned for my physical safety.	7%

## Experience of the complaint process

### Level of satisfaction with the complaints process

The majority were dissatisfied with all aspects of their institution’s complaints process.

Percentage (%) of survey participants who experienced sexual harassment and their comments regarding their level of satisfaction with the complaints process

Complaint process	Dissatisfied / Very Dissatisfied
The outcome of the complaint/investigation?	48%
Being informed about the status of the complaint?	46%
The amount of time it took to address the complaint?	46%
How you were treated by personnel handling the complaint?	42%
The availability of information on how to file a complaint?	39%

### Complaint outcome

When commenting of the outcome of their complaint, 52% were encouraged to drop the issue, 48% said no action was taken, 45% were labelled a troublemaker and 44% reported negative consequences for them from their employer, including denial of promotion, transfer, reassignment to less favourable work and/or scheduling changes.

Percentage (%) of survey participants who experienced sexual harassment and their comments regarding the outcome of their complaint

Outcome of the complaint	%
I was encouraged to “drop” the issue.	52%
No action was taken.	48%
I was labelled as a trouble-maker, ostracized, victimized or ignored by my colleagues.	45%
There were negative consequences for me for bringing it up (e.g., denial of promotion/training, transfer, reassignment to a less favourable work site or duties, scheduling changes).	44%
My work location or duties were changed in order to avoid the person.	20%

The person was counselled on changing their behaviour.	18%
The person stopped the behaviour.	13%
There was an adverse action taken against the person for their behaviour (e.g., demotion, loss of pay, termination)	13%

## **Perpetrators of the sexual harassment**

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### **Sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace – at any time**

Preliminary findings of these complete responses show that nearly one third (29%), had personally experienced sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace with much higher levels for women (77%) women compared to men (17%) and a small number (5%) of people who identified as non-binary. An alarming 83% of these respondents were aware of others who had been sexually harassed in a tertiary education workplace. Concerningly, most respondents have indicated that this behaviour was repetitive, with 66% stating it occurred occasionally and over 15% indicated it occurred regularly. Reinforcing comments from respondents that perpetrators were often able to continue behaviour unimpeded, 34% indicated that the harasser was the same person for all events.

### **Sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace – in the last 12 months**

More than a quarter (26%) of those who had experienced sexual harassment at any time, indicated that they had also experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, with 36% saying they were aware of others who had been sexually harassed in the last 12 months. Again, behaviour was repeated, with nearly two thirds (64%) stating that the behaviour occurs occasionally and 17% said it occurs regularly. Repeat offending by a single perpetrator was less but still of concern with 15% reporting the harasser was the same person.

Most (81%) identified the harasser as a male, while 15% identified the harasser as a female. Over a third (38%) said the harasser was a co-worker while 31% said the harasser was a student.

### **Sexual harassment in a tertiary education workplace – current primary job**

Alarmingly more than half (56%) who had experienced sexual harassment at any time also said they had experienced sexual harassment in their current primary job, while 48% were aware of others who had been sexually harassed in their current primary job. Over two thirds

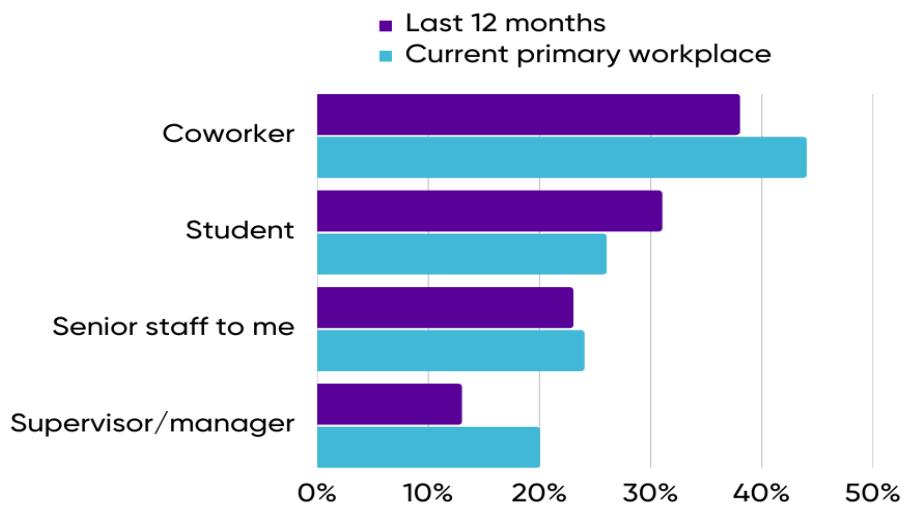


(71%) said this behaviour occurs occasionally, 12% said it occurs regularly and 26% said the harasser was the same person.

Most 76% identified the harasser as a male and 21% identified the harasser as a female. Nearly half (44%) said the harasser was a co-worker while 26% said the harasser was a student.

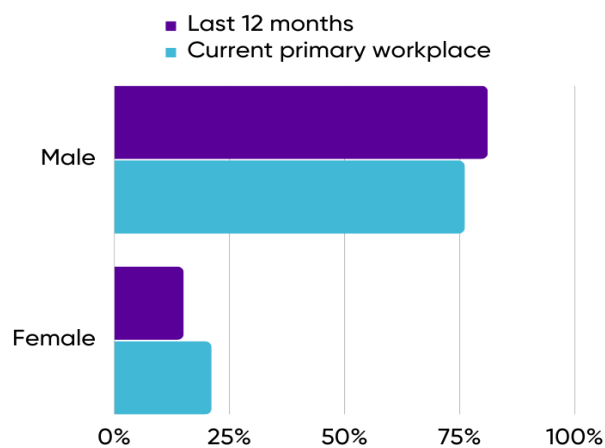
Composition of people, as identified by survey participants, who were the perpetrators of the sexual harassment

### IDENTITY OF PERPETRATOR OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT



Gender of people, as identified by survey participants, who were the perpetrators of the sexual harassment

### GENDER OF PERPETRATOR OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

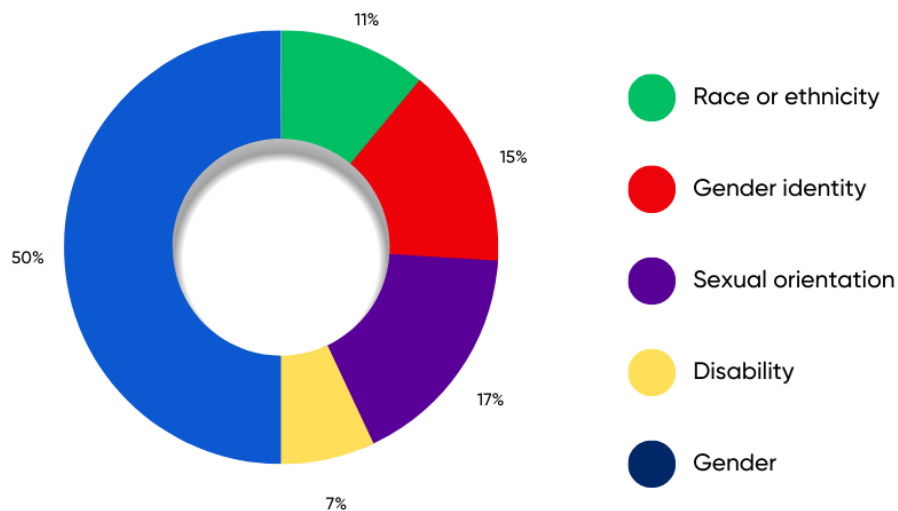


## Intersectional harassment

The survey also asked questions related to intersectional harassment – for example, harassment that relates to race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity). This behaviour may include both unwanted sexual attention/sexual coercion or crude, offensive, or hostile behaviours. Half the respondents (50%) reported that the harassment they experienced was based on their gender, 17% said it was based on their sexual orientation, 15% on their gender identity, 11% on their race or ethnicity and 7% on their disability.

Percentage (%) of survey participants who identified intersectional harassment as being based on the following factors

### INTERSECTIONAL HARASSMENT IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS BASED ON...

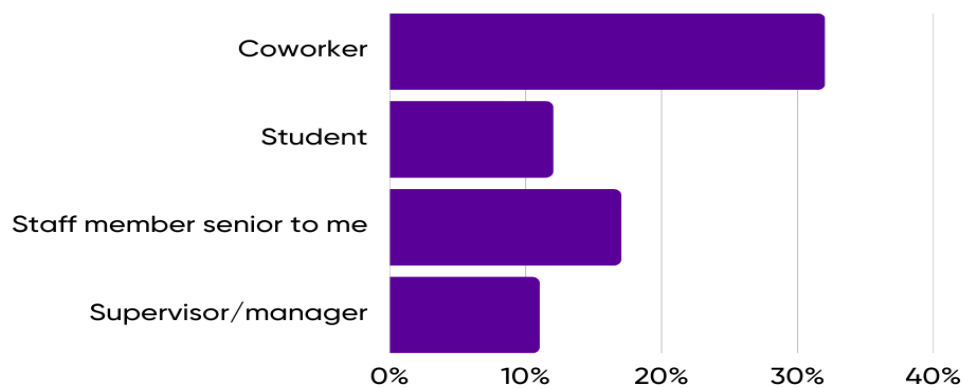


Age also featured as a factor in the comments section of the survey, both regarding being young and being old.

Over one third of respondents reported that the perpetrator of this harassment they experienced in the last 12 months was a coworker.

Composition of people, as identified by survey participants, who were the perpetrators of the intersectional harassment

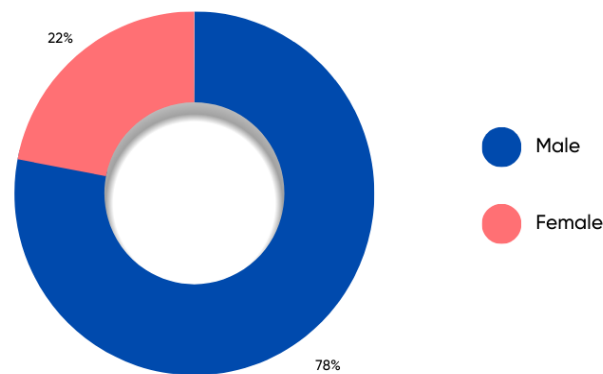
### PERPETRATOR IN INTERSECTIONAL HARASSMENT IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



Nearly three quarters (78%) of respondents reported that the perpetrator of this harassment they experienced in the last 12 months was a male.

Gender of people, as identified by survey participants, who were the perpetrators of intersectional harassment

### GENDER OF PERPETRATOR OF INTERSECTIONAL HARASSMENT IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



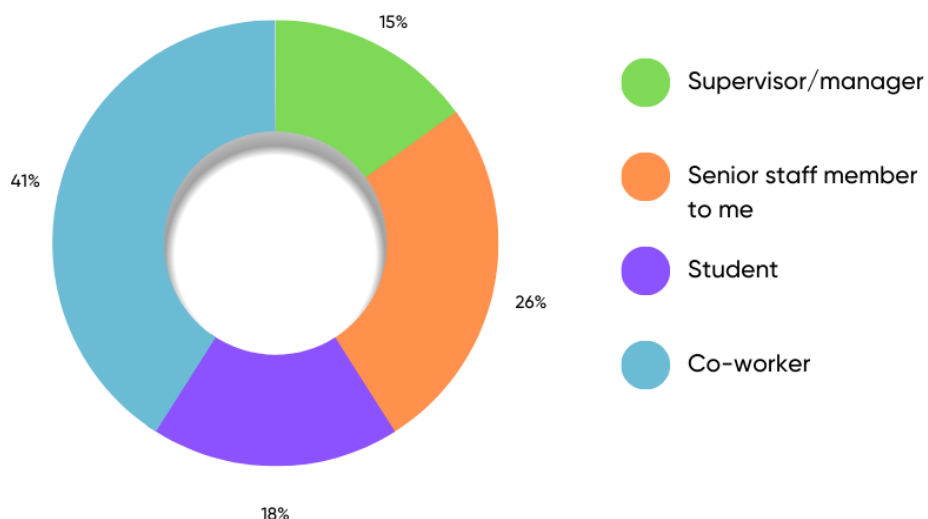
## Gender-based harassment

The survey also asked questions related to gender-based harassment. This form of harassment is seen as behaviour that is sexist, crude, offensive, or hostile and that are devoid of sexual interest, but aims to insult or offend on the basis of gender stereotypes.

Regarding the identity of the perpetrator(s) of gender-based harassment, respondents reported similarly to the way they had with intersectional harassment. Nearly half (41%) identified coworkers as the main perpetrator(s), with 26% identifying a staff member senior to them, 18% a student and 15% saying a supervisor/manager.

Percentage (%) of survey participants who identified the following people as the perpetrators of gender-based harassment

### IDENTITY OF PERPETRATOR OF GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



## **Consequences for harassers**

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The consequences for harassers can be gleaned from the way respondents reported the outcome of complaints they made. When commenting on the outcome of their complaint, 52% were encouraged to drop the issue, 48% said no action was taken, 45% were labelled a troublemaker and 44% reported negative consequences for them from their employer, including denial of promotion, transfer, reassignment to less favourable work, scheduling changes (see also the section above on reporting harassment).

# COMPARISON WITH 2019 SURVEY

## Personal experience of sexual harassment

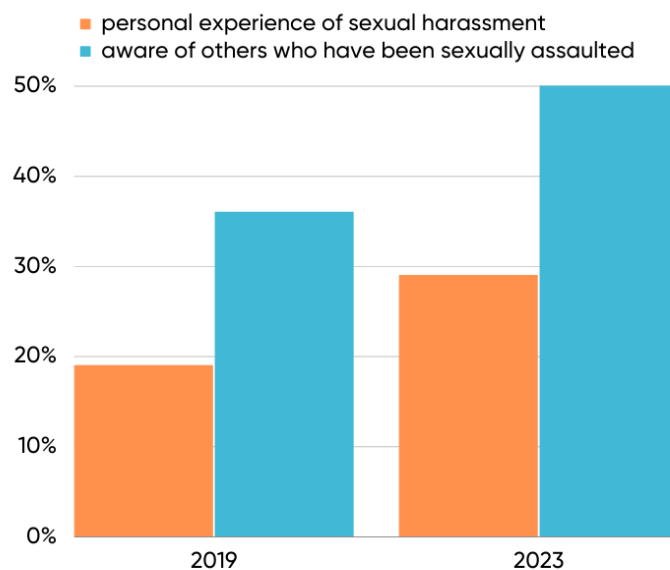
While the NTEU’s first survey revealed that nearly two in ten respondents (19%) who completed the survey had personally experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, with more than twice as many women (25%) as men (10%) and 15% non-binary people reporting personal incidents, the second survey found this had grown to nearly three in ten respondents (29%), still with higher levels for women (38%) women compared to men (14%) and 33% of non-binary people reporting personal incidents.

## Aware of others who have experienced sexual harassment.

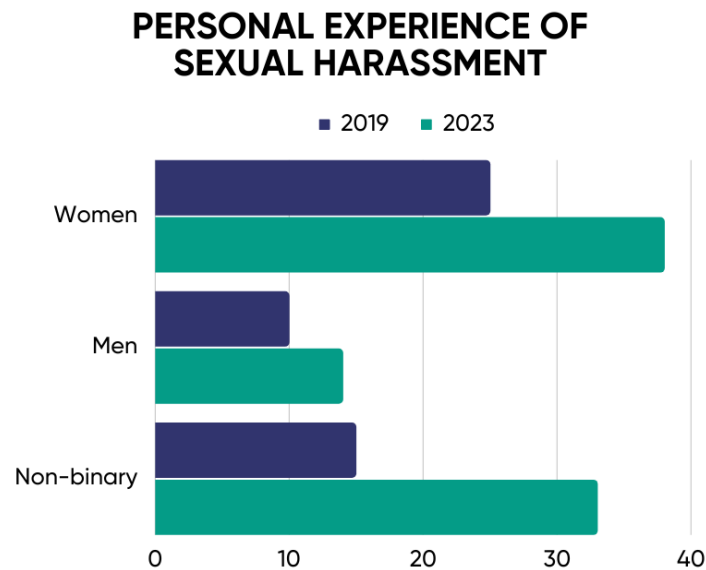
Similarly, while the first survey found that over one third (36%) of all respondents who completed the survey indicated that they were aware of others who had been sexually harassed in their workplaces, the second survey saw a considerable increase, to over half of respondents (50%).

Percentage (%) of survey participants’ experience of sexual harassment – comparison 2019 to 2023

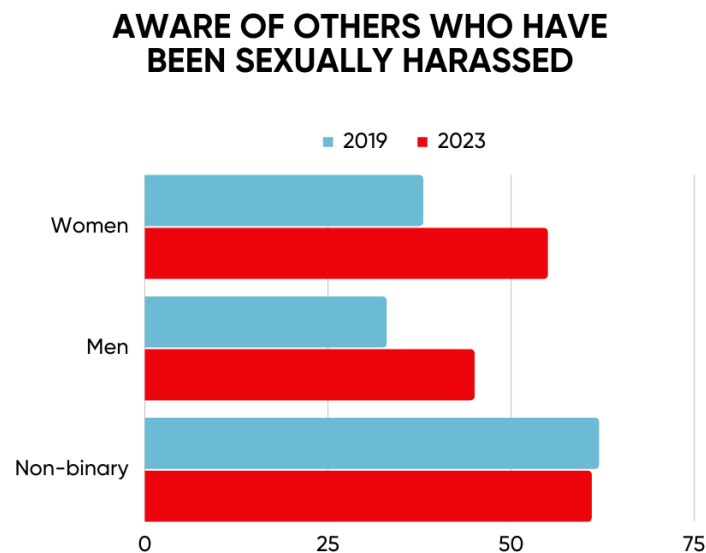
### EXPERIENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT



Gender of survey participants' who've had a personal experience of sexual harassment – comparison 2019 to 2023



Gender of survey participants' who are aware of others who have been sexually harassed – comparison 2019 to 2023



**NOTE:** In relation to broader patterns of behaviour, a preliminary comparison between the first and second survey shows little, if any, improvements. Further analysis of the two surveys will be made over the next 12 months and any additional findings reported on.