



7 August 2025

## New legal protections against tech-based harassment of female students and school staff must be replicated nationwide

Protecting students and school staff from gendered violence and online abuse requires a whole-of-community response. The [introduction of laws in NSW](#) criminalising the production and distribution of sexually explicit deepfakes is an important step towards creating safer schools and safer communities.

Harmful sexual behaviours, often influenced by explicit online material, [are on the rise in schools](#), leaving many women teachers feeling unsafe at work. [IEU members are reporting](#) increasing instances of verbal abuse, physical assaults, and sexualised intimidation.

The IEU has been [calling for urgent action](#) to end such harassment.

New [laws introduced into the NSW Parliament](#) are an important part of the broader response needed to protect school staff and students. The laws will criminalise the production, sharing and distribution of sexually explicit deepfakes that are designed to depict an identifiable person.

All state and territory governments must urgently review relevant legislation to ensure protections similar to those introduced in NSW are in place. Every woman teacher and student in the nation, regardless of school, sector or location, deserves to be safe at school and free from online abuse.

Updated legal protections are an important part of the community-wide commitment needed to build strong school cultures based on safety, gender equity, and mutual respect.

In consultation with staff and their union, employers must develop best-practice harassment policies and support mechanisms. Schools have a duty to respond to cases of abuse swiftly and decisively - the wellbeing and safety of staff experiencing harassment must remain paramount.

Teachers and school leaders cannot solve these problems alone – it is vital that parents and the wider community call out harmful behaviour and actively promote positive role models for boys.