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EIS Policy / Advice for members

# Violence Against Women

February 2020



# EIS Violence Against Women Policy

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## INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES

### *1. What is 'Violence Against Women'?*

Violence against women (VAW) is used to refer to a range of actions that harm, or cause suffering and indignity to, women and children.

VAW is both a cause and a consequence of women's wider societal inequality. This includes economic inequality (the pay, income and pensions gap between men and women); political inequality (women's under-representation and men's over-representation in decision making structures); and social inequality (women's experience of unfair treatment in various ways including objectification and stereotyping).

The umbrella term 'violence against women' includes commonly known forms such as domestic abuse, rape and sexual violence, but there are many other forms of violence that predominantly affect women and girls. These include but are not limited to:

- physical, sexual and psychological violence in the family, the general community or institutions, which includes domestic abuse, rape, incest and child sexual abuse

- [sexual harassment](#) and intimidation at work and in public
- commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, pornography and trafficking
- so called 'honour based' violence, including dowry-related violence, female genital mutilation, forced and child marriages and 'honour' crimes.

Some forms of online/digitally facilitated abuse, which are highly prevalent,<sup>1</sup> have only recently begun to be recognised as crimes and as part of the spectrum of VAW. Sharing a person's intimate or explicit images or videos without consent, for example, (sometimes referred to as 'revenge porn') or 'cyber-flashing' (when a man sends an intimate image of himself to a woman without her consent, through messages, social media, airdrop or email) are crimes, under the [Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#). These offences are not yet widely understood, despite public information campaigns<sup>2</sup>.

Emerging technology-related offences, such as those described above, underline that as society develops, there can be new expressions of VAW, which educators and trade unionists should be alert to; but they share the same roots as longer-standing abuses – inequality, and a disrespect of women and girls by men and boys.

Because VAW is rooted in wider societal inequality between men and women, it is often referred to as gender-based violence. Some organisations and activists describe it as men's violence against women, to place emphasis on the perpetrators, encourage men to see that they have a role to play in ending such abuse and to highlight that it is not solely a 'women's issue'.<sup>3</sup>

Some forms of VAW have had a high media and political profile in recent years, such as sexual harassment, sparked by high profile legal cases and the 'Me Too' campaign to share stories of abuse. This highlighted a continuing lack of societal understanding of why women don't report abuse. (NB: the EIS has discrete [advice on tackling sexual harassment](#)).

## 2. VAW is a human rights violation

Following decades of struggle by the global women's rights movement, the international community now views violence against women as a human rights concern, not as a private matter in which states should not interfere. VAW is now described by bodies such as the UN and the World Health Organisation as a human rights violation.

*"Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation. And, it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.engender.org.uk/news/blog/combating-online-abuse-whose-job-is-it-anyway/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://notyourstoshare.scot/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson\\_katz\\_violence\\_against\\_women\\_it\\_s\\_a\\_men\\_s\\_issue/discussion](https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson_katz_violence_against_women_it_s_a_men_s_issue/discussion)

*to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace.”*

Kofi Annan, Former UN Secretary-General

Describing VAW as a human rights violation recognises that women are not exposed to such violence by accident, or because of an innate vulnerability. Instead, VAW is the result of structural, deep-rooted discrimination which the state has an obligation to address. Preventing and addressing gender-based violence is therefore a legal and moral obligation requiring legislative, administrative and institutional measures and reforms. It also requires the eradication of gender stereotypes which condone or perpetuate gender-based violence and underpin the structural inequality of women and men.

The Scottish Government defines gender-based violence as follows, the derived from the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women:

*'Gender based violence is a function of gender inequality, and an abuse of male power and privilege. It takes the form of actions that result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women and children, or affront to their human dignity, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. It is men who predominantly carry out such violence, and women who are predominantly the victims of such violence. By referring to violence as 'gender based' this definition highlights the need to understand violence within the context of women's and girls' subordinate status in society. Such violence cannot be understood, therefore, in isolation from the norms, social structure and gender roles within the community, which greatly influence women's vulnerability to violence.'*

This is the definition which has informed the 'Equally Safe' strategy to end VAW, which is a joint initiative of Scottish Government and COSLA.

### 3. VAW affects all women

Violence against women affects all women of all backgrounds: it crosses class, income, culture, ethnicity, sexuality and (dis)ability. Women who have not personally experienced violence or abuse may know someone who has experienced it; or may modify their lives in ways which reflect the fear of violence (taking taxis rather than walking home alone, for example). They may also be uncomfortable around visible manifestations of a culture in which women are not valued as men's equals, for example, strip clubs in a city centre, fearing or expecting harassment from its patrons. They may witness online abuse and feel that online spaces are unsafe for women. In this way VAW affects all women's lives.

Many incidents of violence and abuse against women and girls go unreported. Despite that, there is ample evidence on a whole range of fronts to support the view that violence against women and girls remains a serious issue in Scotland and the UK. For example:

- The Equality and Human Rights Commission reports that every year across the UK at least three million women experience violence and many more are living with the legacies of past abuse<sup>4</sup>.
- The number of people killed as a result of domestic violence in the UK is at its highest level in five years. The vast majority of victims are women, while suspects are predominantly male.<sup>5</sup>
- In 2017-18 there were 59,541 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by Police Scotland. Women made up 82% of the victims.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2017-18, there were 2,255 cases of rape and attempted rape reported to Police Scotland.
- There has been an upward trend in sexual crimes in Scotland since 2010-11, with reports of rape & attempted rape more than doubling (increasing by 115% overall) between 2010-11 and 2018-19.<sup>7</sup>
- Global prevalence figures indicate that about 1 in 3 (35%) of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.<sup>8</sup>
- A Europe wide study carried out by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights found that an estimated 83-102 million women (45-55% of women) in the EU-28 have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15.<sup>9</sup>
- In a study published by the NSPCC, girls were shown to have experienced more frequent and more severe emotional, physical and sexual partner violence than boys – one in three 13-17-year-old girls reported some form of sexual violence. Girls reported high levels of coercive control including surveillance through the use of online technologies and, unlike the boys in this study, reported that their welfare was severely detrimentally affected.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4. *What is Domestic Abuse?*

Domestic abuse is the most prevalent form of VAW. It is much more than physical violence; it can also be psychological, emotional, sexual and financial in nature. It's behaviour that leaves the person who experiences it feeling scared, intimidated or controlled.

The Scottish Government's definition of domestic abuse is 'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been,

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/violence-against-women-domestic-abuse-sexual-violence-workplace-policies.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-49459674>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/vaw-facts/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/statistics/2019/09/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19/documents/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19/govscot%3Adocument/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.rapecrisisScotland.org.uk/help-facts/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/vaw-facts/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/equally-safe-scotlands-strategy-prevent-eradicate-violence-against-women-girls/pages/3/>

intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality’.

Within this definition, controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape, and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation, or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten another person. Coercive control is a crime in Scottish law, under the [Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#).

### *Domestic abuse myths and facts*

It is important to understand that many myths about domestic abuse have taken hold in our society, and to look behind what you might think you know or understand about it. <sup>11</sup> Some common myths and facts are set out below; women’s aid organisations can provide information on others<sup>12</sup>.

<b>Myths</b>	<b>Facts</b>
A woman experiencing abuse should just leave	Leaving an abuser is fraught with danger and risk
Domestic abuse only affects disadvantaged or poor women	Domestic abuse can affect anyone
Domestic abuse doesn’t happen in same-sex relationships	LGBT people can also experience domestic abuse
It isn’t domestic abuse if he doesn’t hit you	Being made to live in fear, having reduced access to finances, being isolated from friends and family, or controlled in other ways are all forms of abuse which are crimes
Domestic abuse is a private matter	Domestic abuse is a crime, a human rights violation and something that we all have a role in ending
Domestic abuse ceases or lessens when the woman is pregnant	Domestic abuse often escalates when women are pregnant; pregnancy is a risk factor for domestic abuse
Alcohol or drugs make men violent	Many men are violent when sober;

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.refuge.org.uk/our-work/forms-of-violence-and-abuse/domestic-violence/myths-of-domestic-violence/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/what-is-domestic-abuse/myths/>

	many men who drink alcohol never abuse their partner; blaming drink or drugs is an excuse; abuse is a choice
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### 5. *The Effects of Violence Against Women*

VAW is very serious. It can cause death (one woman dies every three days in the UK, killed by a partner or ex-partner<sup>13</sup>); it can also cause serious physical injuries as well as long-term emotional and psychological damage. Signs of physical abuse will not always be evident. Domestic abuse can cause hidden problems, such as anxiety, depression, sleeplessness, low self-esteem and lack of confidence, as well as feelings of embarrassment, shame and guilt. Women may feel unable to confide in others or seek help and may hide the abuse, suffering in silence for many years.

Women may find it very difficult to keep working while coping with abuse at home. Poor timekeeping or frequent sickness may be symptoms of domestic abuse, particularly when the victim is trying to conceal the problem. Some women will not be allowed to socialise with colleagues outside work and may be forced to keep to a timetable about their hours of work.

A small number of women may be able to make the decision to leave or eject the abuser quickly. However, leaving an abuser or getting them to leave a shared home is fraught with risk, danger and difficulty. The abused woman may fear what her partner will do if she leaves, particularly if they have threatened to kill her, her children, or himself/herself. She may believe that staying with them is better for the children; she may believe that they will change; she may not have access to money, or anywhere to go; she may be very isolated.

An abused woman's self-esteem will have been steadily worn down. She may question how she will manage on her own, or not realise that she has any other options. She may feel ashamed of what has happened and believe the abuse is her fault. Major problems relating to finding new accommodation, new schools for children and operating on a reduced income may seem insurmountable. Few women know about or are able to access legal remedies such as Non-Harassment Orders or Exclusion Orders<sup>14</sup>.

### 6. *Differential impact and intersecting inequalities*

Some groups of women face additional problems. A robust VAW policy should take account of the different needs and experiences that people with more than one protected characteristic under the Equality Act may have, for example:

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/public-leaders-network/2017/dec/14/domestic-abuse-violence-women-femicide-review-refuge-cuts-in-numbers>

<sup>14</sup> <https://womensaid.scot/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ExclusionOrderReport.pdf>

- **Older women** are less likely to report their experiences of domestic abuse, and face serious barriers to accessing support; they are offered few appropriate services; and can encounter cultural and professional assumptions and may have greater reliance on an abusive partner<sup>15</sup>
- **Disabled women** are more likely to experience domestic abuse and sexual violence than non-disabled women. Disabled women are particularly vulnerable if their partner is their carer. They may fear for their independence if their support in their own home disappears.
- **Black and minority ethnic women (BME)** face a range of problems in addition to those already outlined; not least racism and stereotyping when looking for help. Some minority ethnic women may experience pressure from an extended family network not to leave an abusive partner to avoid bringing shame within the wider community. Some BME communities have experienced lack of support from services because staff have feared being labelled racist or have wrongly ascribed certain behaviours to 'cultural differences'.
- **Lesbian, gay and bisexual women** (and gay and bisexual men) can be vulnerable to abusers who undermine their sexuality or threaten to 'out' them to colleagues, employers and family members.
- **Transgender women** and men may have fewer services available to them (although in practice all VAW services in Scotland are open to transwomen).
- **Women living in poverty or affected by low income** may find it harder to leave an abusive partner due to a lack of resources.

Women are not a homogenous group, and most women do not neatly fit into one category; in reality, all humans are complex beings with richly layered lives. A woman may be disabled and also from a BME community; she may be poor and gay; she may be older and disabled. Policies should recognise the complexity of women's lives and the many barriers that less privileged social groups can experience to the realisation of their human rights.

## 7. *What about men?*

The umbrella term of violence against women is used due to the disproportionate impact of certain types of violence and abuse on women (see page 1). Nevertheless, we know that men can experience domestic abuse and sexual violence, from a female partner or in same sex relationships. Boys can experience childhood sexual abuse. Some men are exploited sexually for commercial gain (nearly always by other men).

Workplace policies on violence, abuse, harassment and equality can include men, but it should be acknowledged that their experiences and

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/10688-DMViolenceReport.pdf>

support needs are likely to be different to women's. Men experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence may find it more difficult to disclose abuse and may find barriers to accessing support; although, conversely, they may have greater access to resources and less fear for their personal safety than women in the equivalent situation, and so may need different supports.

Men who perpetrate abuse need to be challenged in ways which ensure protection for victims themselves and bystanders who call out the behaviour as unacceptable. No one should feel powerless to address abusive behaviour in the workplace, or the misogynistic attitudes which underpin it, or the perpetration of sex discrimination which often accompanies it. Passivity or complicity are likely to prolong and/or intensify the negative impact on people who experience abuse.

### **The impact on children**

Living in a home where there is violence or abuse has a significant impact on children both in terms of physical, emotional and mental health. A 2004 briefing by the Royal College of Psychiatrists lists some potential effects upon children and young people as follows:

- Anxiety or depression
- Sleeplessness, nightmares or flashbacks
- Being easily startled
- Physical symptoms such as tummy aches and bed wetting
- Temper tantrums and behavioural problems at school
- Behave as though they are much younger than their chronological age
- Outward aggression or internalisation of distress and withdrawal from other people
- Lowered sense of self-worth
- Truancy, alcohol or drug use, self-harm and eating disorders.

The Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act is the only UK legislation with a specific statutory sentencing aggravation to reflect the harm that can be caused to children growing up in an environment where domestic abuse takes place. It is now widely recognised that living with abuse is an adverse childhood experience<sup>16</sup>, and that adversity in childhood can have lifelong consequences.

Children who have witnessed or lived through violence or abuse can experience a range of issues which affect their ability to thrive, including at school. Distressed behaviour may be rooted in this abuse.

### **VAW: A WORKPLACE ISSUE**

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.healthscotland.scot/population-groups/children/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces/overview-of-aces>

VAW is a workplace issue for three main reasons:

1. because everyone has a right to be safe and supported at work
2. because women who experience abuse often do so at work, and the abuse may affect their ability to do their job as effectively as possible; and
3. because having access to financial resources expands a survivor's opportunities to escape VAW: a steady income is often key to a survivor's economic independence, and so it is crucial for employers to be aware of how to support staff who experience VAW.

Being a good employer includes supporting staff through new or difficult periods in their lives, and employees should expect that if they experience VAW, their workplace will be supportive. For some women who have experienced or are living with VAW, the workplace can be a safe haven. Work may be the only resource a person has left, particularly if the abuser has succeeded in cutting off other sources of family and social support. It may be the only means to retain some financial independence.

It is in an employer's interest to ensure their staff are able to do their jobs as well as possible and do not have to leave suddenly or take extended or regular unplanned absences. Experiencing VAW can lead to decreased productivity, unplanned time off, sickness absence, being distracted at work, arriving late, having to leave early or leaving altogether. A good VAW policy will seek to prevent those consequences of experiencing VAW. This is important, not only for the morale and wellbeing of the woman affected, but also for her economic independence, which in turn can lessen the risk of continuing to be affected or being affected again in future. Supporting staff who are experiencing violence against women can also support improved performance and productivity.

Seventy-five per cent of those experiencing domestic abuse are targeted at work. It is often possible for perpetrators to use workplace resources, such as phones, email and other means, to threaten, harass or abuse their current or former partner.

The colleagues of someone experiencing VAW may also be affected. They may be followed from work, or subject to questioning about the person's contact details, location or activities. They may have to cover for other workers experiencing VAW while they are off, try to fend off the abuse targeted at them, and fear for their own safety. Furthermore, colleagues may be aware of the abuse and violence their colleague is experiencing, but not know how to help, which can be distressing.

With research showing that 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, it is likely that all workplaces have staff that have been or are experiencing abuse, as well as those who are perpetrators of abuse. Given that the education workforce is heavily female dominated, it is even more likely that educational establishments will have those with experience of VAW among their workforces. And of course, nurseries,

schools, colleges and universities will also be educating children and young people who have lived through various forms of VAW.

Taking all the above into account, it makes good sense for all educational establishments to ensure that staff are aware of and have access to local authority policies addressing VAW. Schools and other education establishments may wish to customise these to reflect their own contexts.

## **TAKING ACTION**

### *8. What Can Trade Unions Do?*

VAW is a complex issue, and still not as widely discussed as it ought to be. People may misunderstand the issues, and may not know that they are working with VAW survivors because of the stigma and fear attached to experiencing and disclosing abuse. It is important for all trade unionists to find out about its impact and not to be judgemental or to think there are "quick fixes" to this problem, or to apportion blame.

While the focus of this advice is the significant and serious impact on women, the actions recommended herein are not sex or gender specific; they should be used to support all EIS members who find themselves in these circumstances.

Some women, who are affected by domestic abuse, are disciplined or dismissed for behaviour or actions at work which are a consequence of the abuse which has happened outwith the working day. Violent behaviour, verbal or physical, has an impact on the victim's work, confidence and competence.

Trade Unionists should know that possible signs of experiencing domestic abuse include:

- Changes in behaviour and work performance
- Preoccupation/lack of concentration
- General withdrawal and withdrawal from social networks
- Increased and/or unexplained absences
- Receiving constant harassing phone calls to the workplace
- Bruises or injuries that are unexplained or for which explanations just don't add up

Employees who have experienced domestic abuse or other kinds of violence may need:

- Time off to go to the police to report the incident(s)
- Time off to go to court
- Time off to meet with support/advocacy organisations
- Time off to find a new place to live or to visit new schools for their children
- Time off to recover from injuries or from other health issues e.g. sleeplessness

- A different private workstation or privacy in other ways, e.g. not being in a classroom that is visible from the street
- To have their phone calls carefully screened
- Additional security at work
- Temporary adjustment to their responsibilities.

Tackling violence against women is everybody's business. It is responsible trade unionism to ensure that we work to deliver effective policies that are known and acted on by everyone. There is a need to:

- Campaign within our membership to end it
- Challenge our own conceptions and behaviours
- Support survivors of violence and abuse
- Work with employers, governments and the voluntary sector in their campaigns to end violence against women, to tackle misogyny and promote gender equality.

Workplace publicity about domestic violence – some suggestions:

- Be aware that a presentation about VAW/abuse can be difficult for those experiencing, or who have experienced, domestic abuse/violence
- Display brochures and posters in public places that explain the issue and send the message that there is no excuse for domestic abuse (see *Resources* section)
- Make safety information available in private places such as staffrooms or in pay advice statements
- Include an article about domestic abuse in an EIS newsletter or bulletin with signposts to helpful organisations.

### 9. *What Can Educational Establishments Do?*

There are various educational resources available for nurseries, schools and higher education providers to choose from (see *Resources* section).

Education programmes focussing on VAW/domestic abuse should:

- encourage healthy relationships amongst young people
- promote self-respect, respect for others and for difference
- challenge and eliminate tolerance of violence against women amongst young people
- encourage a sense of social responsibility
- promote positive skills for healthy relationships, based on equality and respect
- support equal rights for young men and women, boys and girls, and those who describe their gender identity as non-binary or fluid
- present alternatives to models of masculinity and femininity which encourage or condone coercion or abuse
- promote understanding of power relationships that provide the context in which abuse and victimisation occur
- promote the rights and responsibilities of children and young people as citizens
- encourage confidence, self-respect and emotional literacy in children

- and young people in preparation for adulthood and parenthood
- help children and young people know what help and support is available to them
- provide accurate, age appropriate information about violence and abuse
- try to challenge prevalent misinformation, stereotypes and attitudes that contribute to societal acceptability of violence.

## **WORKPLACE SUPPORT**

### **11. Legislation**

#### *Human Rights law*

Under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#) all public bodies have an obligation to protect the human rights of individuals and to ensure that their human rights are not being violated. VAW denies women and girls the most fundamental of human rights. Failing to tackle this could lead to a breach of the rights afforded to individuals, as laid out in the Human Rights Act.

#### *Equality law*

The [Equality Act 2010](#) created a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which requires all public bodies to promote equality of opportunity between women and men and to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment in all its functions. The responsibility lies with public sector employers to implement the PSED effectively and this must take account of all workplace gender equality issues including bullying, harassment and violence.

They must examine all aspects of work to ensure that serious action is taken to promote equality between men and women, and to challenge discrimination. This will include

- appropriate risk assessments, including stress risk assessment
- appropriate equality impact assessments
- tackling harassment and bullying of, and violence against, women workers
- ensuring equal pay
- ensuring fairness in recruitment, selection and promotion processes
- other measures to promote equality such as period dignity campaigns or developing policies around carers' rights or the needs of menopausal workers.

#### *Health and Safety at Work law*

Health and safety laws stipulate that workers have the right to work in a safe environment where risks to health and wellbeing are considered and dealt with effectively.

The five main areas of Health and Safety law relevant to violence at work are:

- the [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)
- the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)
- Safety Representative and Safety Committees Regulations 1977
- Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996.

In general, employers have a duty of care under this legislation which means that they should look after an employee's welfare at work and address issues that affect their health. An effective workplace policy on VAW can ensure that employers are complying with these laws.

## **12. Practical Steps**

### *Practical Steps: EIS Reps*

Practical steps which can be taken by EIS representatives to support members suffering domestic abuse include:

- Seek to develop your understanding and awareness of the issue- EIS Equality Reps can assist with this.
- Be sympathetic, sensitive and non-judgemental.
- Be prepared to listen attentively and empathetically, allowing the member to lead the conversation.
- Don't ask simplistic questions like, 'Why don't you leave them/him/her?'; leaving a perpetrator of domestic abuse is fraught with difficulties and risk
- Remember confidentiality is important. **Information should not be given to a third party- either colleagues or the employer- without the prior permission of the person concerned.**
- Women experiencing abuse are vulnerable, likely to be in a fragile state, and facing difficulty in making decisions- talking to their EIS Rep might be a first of many steps in changing their circumstances.
- Recommend that physical violence, stalking or coercive control are reported to the police **by the victim**- it could become a life-threatening situation.
- Any decision to follow a grievance procedure must be made at the woman's own pace and when she feels confident to move forward.
- Try not to pressurise the member into taking action for which they are not prepared.
- Seek advice from the Local Association/Branch Secretary as required.

### *Practical Steps: EIS Local Associations and Branches*

Practical steps which can be taken by EIS Local Associations and FELA and ULA Branches to support members experiencing VAW include:

- Work with EIS Equality Reps on the issue.
- Raise awareness of the fact that the EIS can give practical support.

- Provide information on external support available, e.g. Scottish Women's Aid (see *Resources* section), since members may not wish to seek assistance from within the workplace.
- Negotiate a harassment procedure in the workplace which includes action on when both parties work in the same school/college/university.
- Negotiate agreements at the appropriate fora e.g. LNCTs, which include paid special leave – sometimes known as 'safe leave'– for women who have experienced or are living with VAW.
- Negotiate a policy on VAW with management – see appendix for a policy checklist.

Local Associations/Branches should also encourage employers to:

- Use existing policies to allow an individual experiencing VAW to change work patterns or workload and allow flexible or more flexible working or special leave to facilitate any practical arrangements.
- Divert phone calls and email messages, if agreed with the person.
- Alert reception/school/college/university office/admin staff if the abuser is known to come to the workplace.
- Provide a copy of any existing orders (e.g. Non-Harassment Orders) against the abuser and a photograph of the abuser to reception/school/college/university office/admin staff.
- Check that staff have arrangements for getting safely to and from home
- Ensure safe storage of and keep up to date personal information, such as temporary or new addresses, bank or health care details.
- Review the employee's next of kin information.
- Where practical, consider offering a temporary or permanent change of workplace, or working times/patterns.
- Where practical, offer changes to specific duties, such as not expecting the employee to attend open access events such as sports day/open days.
- Move the employee out of public view i.e. ensure that they are not visible from ground floor windows.
- Ensure that the employee does not work alone or in an isolated area.
- Agree with the employee what to tell colleagues and how they should respond if a violent partner/ex-partner telephones or visits the workplace.
- Keep a record of any incidents of abuse in the workplace, including persistent telephone calls, emails or visits to the employee by their partner/ex-partner.

A negotiated workplace agreement could include:

- Training on VAW for all staff
- Awareness raising
- Guarantees of confidentiality
- Time off or 'safe leave' arrangements for counselling, medical treatment, or recuperation, re-housing or financial/legal advice
- Financial assistance if possible
- Redeployment if possible

- Review of absence management policies.

A consequence of this policy development may be the need to review existing health and safety procedures. For example, following a disclosure of domestic abuse, a risk assessment may need to be carried out for that member of staff leading to temporary or permanent changes to hours or duties. Similarly, procedures for the recording of violent incidents may need revision if both parties work in the same school/college/university.

All staff/members need to be made aware that the policy exists. It should be regularly monitored and reviewed and should state who will do this.

## RESOURCES

### *Support organisations*

#### **Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline**

0800 027 1234 (free, 24 hours)

<https://sdafmh.org.uk/>

#### **Scottish Women's Aid**

Specialist domestic abuse organisation – umbrella body for 36 local women's aid branches across Scotland

[www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk](http://www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk)

#### **Shakti Women's Aid**

Women's aid organisation for BME women in Edinburgh, Fife, Lothians,

Dundee, Stirling, Falkirk, and Clackmannanshire

<https://shaktiedinburgh.co.uk/> / 0131 475 2399

#### **Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid**

Women's aid organisation for BME women in Glasgow/West of Scotland

<http://www.hematgryffe.org.uk/>

#### **Rape Crisis Scotland**

Specialist sexual violence organisation and umbrella body for a network of rape crisis centres across Scotland

Helpline: 08088 01 03 02 (free, every day, 6pm to midnight)

<https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk>

#### **Zero Tolerance**

Campaigning organisation specialising in VAW prevention, campaigns, training, and resources including for nurseries and for parents

[www.zerotolerance.org.uk](http://www.zerotolerance.org.uk)

#### **White Ribbon Scotland**

A campaign for men who oppose VAW  
[www.whiteribbonScotland.org.uk](http://www.whiteribbonScotland.org.uk)

**Citizens Advice Scotland**

Can offer advice on housing, legal remedies, finances etc.  
<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/>

**Fearless**

A domestic abuse service that specialises in working with people in LGBT relationships.

[www.fearless.scot](http://www.fearless.scot) / 0131 624 7266

**Abused Men in Scotland**

Organisation supporting men who have experienced abuse

<https://www.abusedmeninScotland.org/>

Helpline: 0808 800 0024

**Respect**

Service supporting perpetrators of abuse to change their behaviour

<http://respect.uk.net/>

**Clare's Law**

Clare's Law, also known as the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme, allows people to find out if their partner has an abusive or violent past.

<https://www.herts.police.uk/assets/Information-and-services/Advice/Domestic-abuse/Clares-Law/Clares-Law-leaflet-disclosure-scheme.pdf>

*Policy and strategy*

Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/disclosure-scheme-for-domestic-abuse-scotland>

Scottish Government – general VAW information

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls/>

SG and COSLA's 'Equally Safe' Strategy

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/equally-safe-scotlands-strategy-prevent-eradicate-violence-against-women-girls/>

Engender (women's policy/advocacy organisation)

<https://www.engender.org.uk/>

UN Declaration on VAW

[https://www.un.org/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.21\\_declaration%20elimination%20vaw.pdf](https://www.un.org/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.21_declaration%20elimination%20vaw.pdf)

## *EIS policies*

Tackling sexual harassment: advice on addressing sexual harassment in educational establishments

<https://www.eis.org.uk/Gender-Equality/TacklingSexualHarassment>

Get It Right for Girls: advice on tackling misogynistic attitudes among children and young people

<https://www.eis.org.uk/Gender-Equality/GIRFGGuidance>

Impact on Children & Young People of Abuse/Violence in the Home

<https://www.eis.org.uk/PoliciesandGuidance/Impact-On-Children-And-Young-People-Of-AbuseandViole>

Dating Abuse Policy

<https://www.eis.org.uk/PoliciesandGuidance/Dating>

EIS domestic abuse posters

Available on request from Education and Equality Department

## *Resources for educational establishments*

### **Early years resources**

Resources to help practitioners enhance gender equality for children across all ELC settings

<https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/work-early-years/>

### **Speaking Out**

Learning resource developed by the Glasgow Women's Library and Scottish Women's Aid; aimed at secondary schools

<https://womenslibrary.org.uk/discover-our-projects/speaking-out/speaking-out-learning-resource/>

### **Equally Safe at School**

Pilot project to promote a whole-school approach to preventing VAW

<https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/equally-safe-at-school/>

### **Talking Gender**

Resources to support conversations about gender stereotypes, consent, young people's relationships and sexual harassment

<https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/talking-gender/>

### **Respect**

Lessons and activities for primary schools

<https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/resources/RESPECT-Primary-Lessons.pdf>

<https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/resources/RESPECT-Primary-Activities.pdf>

### **Mentors in Violence Prevention**

A 'bystander' approach that empowers school students to take an active role in promoting a positive school climate.

<http://mvpscotland.org.uk/>

### **Equally Safe in HE toolkit**

A free resource for Scottish universities working to prevent gender-based violence on their campuses

<https://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/schoolofsocialworksocialpolicy/equallysafeinhighereducation/eshetoolkit/>

### **Not Yours to Share**

Information about non-consensual image sharing, including film clips, which may be suitable for using with upper primary/secondary pupils

<http://notyourstoshare.scot/>

### **National Sexual Violence Prevention Programme**

A primary prevention resource for young people in education and youth settings

<https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/national-sv-prevention-programme/>

Appendix – Workplace policy checklist

Does your VAW policy:

Have a policy statement and/or organisational commitment to oppose all forms of VAW, domestic abuse and sexual violence?	Y/N
Define VAW, domestic abuse and sexual violence?	Y/N
Include statistics on VAW, domestic abuse and sexual violence?	Y/N
Include clear indicators to identify different forms of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence?	Y/N
Contain a commitment to review and monitor the policy on a regular basis?	Y/N
Clarify the specific roles and responsibilities of managers?	Y/N
Clarify the specific roles and responsibilities of the Human Resources team?	Y/N
Clarify the specific roles and responsibilities of employees?	Y/N
Commit the organisation to challenge perpetrators?	Y/N
Commit to prioritise confidentiality wherever possible?	Y/N
Clearly set out information on practical and supportive measures in the workplace?	Y/N

Provide an assurance to prioritise health and safety at work?	Y/N
Include contact details for VAW, domestic abuse and sexual violence link staff?	Y/N
Commit to provide training to all staff on VAW, domestic abuse and sexual violence and what the policy offers?	Y/N
Commit to distributing the policy to all employees?	Y/N
Provide contact details of local and national support and advice agencies?	Y/N

**eis**

**[www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)**