

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Sexual harassment in the UK
film and television industry
since #MeToo

Anna Bull

University of York



UNIVERSITY
of York

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Acknowledgements

First of all, very sincere thanks to all the interviewees who participated in this study. Without your courage in speaking out, we would not be able to shed light on this issue.

This study was made possible by funding from the Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN) via Research England. Particular thanks go to Jon Swords for his support, on behalf of SIGN, throughout the research, especially for feedback on drafts. Very many thanks to Rowan Aust for commenting on several versions of this report as well as to Anna Einarsdottir and Kelly Prince for further feedback. In addition, I am grateful also to all those who helped with disseminating information about the study to enable recruitment of interviewees.

About the Author

Dr Anna Bull is a Senior Lecturer in Education and Social Justice at the University of York. She is the author of the report '[Safe to Speak Up? Sexual harassment in the UK film and television industry since #MeToo](#)'. She is also a founder and director of [The 1752 Group](#), a research and campaigning organisation addressing sexual harassment in higher education.

About SIGN

The Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN) is a unique, business-facing initiative supporting the TV, film and games industries in Yorkshire and the Humber. SIGN aims to make this region the UK's centre for digital creativity, and a model of diverse and inclusive activity. In order to do this, SIGN connects companies, support agencies and universities through a programme of training, business development, research and evaluation.

SIGN is a £6.4M project, starting in Summer 2020, and funded by Research England, the University of York, and its partners. The University of York leads the initiative, working with Screen Yorkshire and eight other Yorkshire universities. An extensive network of collaboration ensures that SIGN is equipped to deliver maximum impact across the region.

Report published October 2023.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Further information

This is the full-length version of the report. [A two-page version, summary version, industry briefing, and policy briefing are also available.](#)

The following support and advice is available for those experiencing sexual harassment and violence in the UK screen industries.

For all genders:

- [Film and TV Charity Bullying Advice Service.](#)
- **For emotional support for sexual violence/harassment, support is available from the [Survivors' Trust](#) or for LGBT+ people, [Galop](#).**
- **Time's Up UK [Guide to Working in Entertainment](#)**

For women:

- **Legal advice for women experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace, you can contact the [Rights of Women helpline](#).**
- **For emotional support for sexual violence/harassment (including for bystanders), [Rape Crisis England and Wales](#); [Rape Crisis Scotland](#); or [Rape Crisis Northern Ireland](#).**

CONTENTS

Introduction	6
Why focus on sexual harassment and violence?	7
Definitions	7
Methods and limitations of the study	8
Sample	8
Part 1: Experiences and impacts of sexual harassment & violence	10
Experiences of sexual harassment, sexual violence and victimisation	10
Impacts and coping strategies	14
Part 2: How gender inequality within the industry enables sexual harassment	19
Patterns of gender inequality in the industry	19
Types of workplace culture	20
Part 3: Reporting sexual harassment & violence: barriers and catalysts	24
Disclosing and reporting sexual harassment or violence	24
Reasons for not reporting	25
Reasons for reporting	28
Confronting the person carrying out the harassment	29
Part 4: Employers' responses to reports of sexual harassment and violence .	30
Guidance on reporting sexual harassment in the workplace	30
Interviewees' ideal responses from employers	30
Employers' handling of reports and disclosures	32
A good practice example	34
How satisfied were interviewees with how their report/disclosure was handled? ..	35
Do freelancers face particular barriers to reporting and/or getting action taken? ..	36
Good and poor practice with handling reports and disclosures	36
The role of HR	37
Part 5: Approaches for addressing sexual harassment and changes since #MeToo	39
What's changed since #MeToo?	39
What initiatives were visible within workplaces for preventing and addressing sexual	

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

harassment and violence?	41
Sexual violence and harassment at TV and film industry events.....	44
Conclusion	46
Recommendations for change	49
Interviewees' recommendations for change	49
Next steps.....	50
Appendix: Detailed overview of problems with handling reports	54
Endnotes	59

INTRODUCTION

Nearly six years after the exposure of Harvey Weinstein sent shockwaves through the international film and television industry, and ten years after the BBC's *Respect at Work Review* followed the exposure of Jimmy Savile's offending, there is now a well-developed conversation on addressing sexual harassment and violence among professional bodies and unions in the industry. But to what extent is this work making a difference to those who are experiencing sexual violence and harassment in their working lives? Has the problem been solved? And is it now safe to speak up?

Against this backdrop, recent surveys have documented the ongoing prevalence and experiences of bullying and harassment within the industry.¹ *Looking Glass '19*, a major industry survey carried out in 2019, found that 39% of women working in film and TV had been subjected to sexual harassment at work at some point during their careers, with freelancers, bisexual people and disabled people being more at risk.² A follow-up study in 2021 found that 11% of all workers had experienced sexual harassment in the last year alone.³ These figures occur in the context of gender inequality within the industry, with women under-represented in senior positions, and as well as in particular roles such as directing and screenwriting.⁴

Despite these findings, there is evidence that practices for addressing sexual harassment at work remain underdeveloped. In the 2021 survey, out of all of those who had experienced some form of bullying or harassment in the past year, only 11% said things improved while 16% of those who reported their experiences said things worsened as a result.⁵ Furthermore, in the *Looking Glass* survey nearly half of managers felt ill-equipped to handle behavioural issues, and two-thirds wanted specific training in this area.⁶ These findings show that there is still substantial work to be done around handling reports of sexual harassment.

Furthermore, they raise serious concerns about the slow pace of change in the ten years since the BBC's *Respect at Work Review*.

But surveys cannot reveal the full picture of how, when, and where sexual violence and harassment is occurring, and what needs to change. Nor do they give space to the survivors' own perspectives on how sexual harassment and violence has impacted them. While media reporting has been impactful in this space, attention needs to be paid to the accounts that are not necessarily newsworthy – to everyday, 'normal' experiences of sexual harassment and violence – and to the experiences of people who are not comfortable, or able to, speak to the media.

This report draws on the experiences of 18 people – 17 women and one man – working or studying in the UK film and television industry, who have experienced and/or spoken up about sexual harassment and violence at work since December 2017. Interviewees work across different genres including high-end television and film, drama, documentary, factual, unscripted, and journalism, in a variety of roles including pre- and post-production, crew, producers, runners, researchers, and an actor.

It builds on previous research and reporting

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

to describe where the industry is at now. It documents recent experiences of how and where sexual harassment and violence are occurring, as well as exploring why people are choosing to report their experiences within their workplace and what happens if they do. It outlines examples of good practice as well as discussing where improvements are needed. And it allows survivors or people who have been involved in reporting sexual harassment and violence to speak out and tell us what they need.

As such, its major contribution is to identify ways to work towards better practice in handling sexual harassment and violence reporting in the workplace. This area is – despite the impacts of the 2017 #MeToo movement (which built on earlier activism under the #MeToo slogan from Tarana Burke) – still a work in progress. The report draws on industry resources from The Film and TV Charity, Bectu, the BFI, and Time's Up UK⁷, as well as guidance for employers on handling sexual harassment complaints in the workplace from the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas), in order to identify examples of good practice as well as areas where better practice is needed.

Why focus on sexual harassment and violence?

This research focuses specifically on sexual harassment and violence, rather than looking at bullying, racial harassment and discrimination as well. This is because there are specific dynamics to, and impacts of, sexual harassment and violence that can get lost when this issue is discussed alongside other forms of discrimination and harassment. In addition, addressing sexual harassment and violence requires an approach that foregrounds gender inequalities and how the gendered cultures of different working environments create a context that enables sexual harassment

and violence. Wider initiatives to improve mental health within the industry – which were evident in the study – are crucial, but alongside this work, sexual harassment and violence need to be specifically addressed. An intersectional approach was taken in order to understand how race, class, disability, sexuality and age impacted interviewees' experiences and the responses from their workplace.

Definitions

The terms 'sexual harassment' and 'sexual violence' are used throughout. These are not necessarily the terms that interviewees used to describe their experiences, but they are useful as umbrella terms to situate these experiences in relation to the industry's legal obligations to address these issues.

The call for interviewees asked for people to participate who had experienced (or think they may have experienced) sexual harassment, violence, or misconduct from someone at work since the #MeToo movement started in late 2017.⁸

Under the Equality Act (2010), sexual harassment occurs when a worker is subjected to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. The conduct need not be sexually motivated, only sexual in nature. It includes conduct that has the purpose or the effect of:

- Violating the worker's dignity.
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that worker.⁹

Sexual harassment also occurs where the worker is treated less favourably because they submitted to, or rejected the unwanted conduct. It's important to note that this definition includes the effect of the behaviours on the person/people targeted, and whether this is reasonable. Even if the person carrying out the behaviour did not

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

intend it to be sexual or offensive, if it is experienced this way then it can be sexual harassment.

Victimisation occurs when someone is treated less favourably as a result of being involved with a discrimination or harassment complaint.

Finally, sexual violence can also constitute sexual harassment (as well as being a criminal offence) if it creates an intimidating or hostile environment, as described above. In this study, the umbrella term 'sexual violence' is used to refer to the following criminal offences that interviewees were subjected to:

- Indecent exposure.¹⁰
- Sexual assault.
- Rape.

Methods and limitations of the study

Ethical review of the study design was carried out by the University of York Department of Education Ethics Committee. Participants were recruited by reaching out directly to organisations supporting minoritized groups and/or women in film and television; via advertising on social media (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook); via an article published in Broadcast Now magazine; and via newsletters for industry organisations. Interviews were carried out on Zoom in February and March 2023. They were carried out by the author of this report, who is trained and experienced in supporting survivors of sexual violence. Support for participants included a debrief after the interview, as well as signposting to specialist support organisations at each stage of the study. Interviewees were given the opportunity to review and redact their interview transcripts, and to comment on the final draft of the report.

Confidentiality was an important ethical consideration in the study. As such, all names given are pseudonyms, and details of interviewees' identities are given as an overview of the whole sample rather than being linked together. In addition, where examples or quotes are used, roles or the area of the industry they work in are not always included. An overview of who was interviewed is given below.

Despite efforts to recruit a more diverse sample¹¹, it is primarily white, middle-class women who are represented in this study. This limited range of representation is likely to reflect the group who feel most confident to speak out about their experiences and to participate in academic research. The findings should be read with this limitation in mind. Nevertheless, the findings below still reveal important learnings for the sector on how disclosures and reports are handled, and where the industry as a whole is at in tackling this issue.

Finally, this study foregrounds interviewees' accounts of their own experiences. These are necessarily partial; in many cases interviewees stated that they did not have a full understanding of the handling of their reports or disclosures. The focus of this report is therefore on how interviewees experienced the events they described: the harassment or violence itself, the industry context and culture, and their employer's and colleagues' responses. Focusing on the perspectives of those who have been subjected to or who have spoken up about sexual harassment and violence in the workplace allows us to better understand what changes are needed in order to improve the experiences of those most affected.

Sample

Out of the 18 interviewees, three were bystanders who became involved in reports of sexual harassment experienced by

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

others. 15 were directly targeted.

Genres where incident(s) took place	Number of interviewees
High-end television	3
Documentary/ observational documentary (scripted and unscripted)	3
Factual/ Entertainment (unscripted)	3
Journalism	4
Drama	4
PR	1

Interviewees' roles/departments (full details of roles are omitted to ensure interviewees' identities remain confidential):

- Actor
- Executive producer
- Researcher (x2)
- Assistant editor (post-production)
- Journalist (x3)
- Runner (x2)
- Costume
- Journalism student
- Script supervisor
- Development producer
- Producer
- Senior PR executive
- Edit producer
- Props

Number of years working in TV and film industry at the time of interview	Number of interviewees
Fewer than 5 years	5
5-9 years	7
10-19 years	3
20 years or more	3

No interviewees identified as trans or non-binary. Other identities were as follows (for those who chose to share this information):

Disability	
Non-disabled	15
Disabled	1
Gender	
Female	17
Male	1
Race	
White	13
Mixed race	1
West Asian	1
Class	
Upper-middle class	1
Middle-class	9
Lower-middle class	2
Working class	2
Sexuality	
Heterosexual	7
Bisexual	4
Queer/pansexual	1
Straight/bi-curious	1

PART 1: EXPERIENCES AND IMPACTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT & VIOLENCE

The findings are divided into five sections. Part One describes interviewees' experiences and impacts of sexual harassment and violence. Part Two analyses ways in which the context of gender inequalities in the industry created a climate that enabled – or impeded – sexual harassment and violence. Part Three looks at how difficult or easy it was for interviewees to raise concerns about these experiences at work, whether as part of a formal report or an informal disclosure.

Part Four examines reporting experiences as well as the outcomes that interviewees would have liked to see, discussing these in the context of industry guidance to tackle sexual harassment. Part Five outlines the initiatives to tackle sexual harassment and violence in the workplace that interviewees were aware of, as well as their perspectives on what has changed since the 2017 #MeToo movement, and what they think needs to change in the industry.

Experiences of sexual harassment, sexual violence and victimisation

The 18 interviewees described in detail 22 instances of sexual harassment, assault or violence experienced at work since December 2017.

Most of these incidents were recent, occurring since 2020, and six interviewees described experiences since 2022. Three described situations that they were

involved in as bystanders, and 15 described being directly targeted, sometimes multiple times. Many also discussed incidents that they were aware of within their workplaces where they were not directly targeted.

Sexual harassment

The types of sexual harassment that interviewees had been subjected to included:

- Sexualised comments, such as sharing unwanted information about someone's sex life, or making comments about someone that involved sexualised scenarios. These included:
 - Describing sexual acts the harasser would like to do to the target.
 - Describing sexual experiences, sometimes in graphic detail.
 - Tricking someone into unwittingly making a sexually explicit statement.
 - Making comments about people's bodies, in person or on social media.
 - Spreading sexualised rumours.
 - Descriptions of sexual acts – sometimes violent ones – targeted at the interviewee.
 - Making sexualised comments about someone's job role or work.
- Sharing sexualised images.
- Unwanted sexual or romantic approaches. In some cases this involved persistent approaches over a period of months or even years. It could be

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

particularly intimidating if the person making the comment was senior to the person targeted.

- Treating someone less favourably because they rejected unwanted conduct of a sexual nature.

For a few interviewees, these behaviours occurred alongside bullying, where the bullying tended to have gendered dimensions. For example, the person carrying out the bullying might primarily target women or would target women in different ways to men. For others, however, sexual harassment occurred in the context of normal working life from colleagues, bosses, strangers or new acquaintances – all of whom were men.

Recognising sexual harassment

Some interviewees were unclear as to whether what they had experienced or witnessed constituted sexual harassment. As Olivia, a researcher in her 20s, described, ‘in my head, workplace sexual harassment is like something out of *Mad Men*, where they’re chasing a secretary around the table or whatever. I don’t see that [at work]’.

In fact, all of the experiences described by interviewees clearly fell within the legal definition of sexual harassment (as defined above), even when interviewees described them as ‘mild’ or ‘low-level’. Some interviewees tended to identify sexual harassment only when it occurred in more extreme or obvious forms. This suggests that across the industry, people may not be recognising sexual harassment when it occurs, and opportunities for these behaviours to be addressed at an early stage can be lost. Therefore, to build awareness of the ways in which sexual harassment can occur in the industry, some examples of are discussed below.

Unwanted sexual or romantic attention is one example of sexual harassment. For some interviewees, such behaviours occurred as an everyday part of their

working lives, from bosses, colleagues, and professional contacts, as Mia described:

I’ve had an experience of going for a professional meeting with a man in the industry [...], we met at a networking event, exchanged emails to meet. And then when we met in the middle of the working day, you know, 15 minutes into that, I was being asked personal questions about my home life, about how many siblings do I have, and I realised quite quickly that, oh, this is being turned into a date. [...] And then before I know it, I’m getting a text the next day, asking me out for a drink, someone who absolutely I met for a professional meeting. Things like that are just relentless. They’re every time I book a meeting with a man on my own. I try and have it at the office, so I can set the tone, but sometimes that’s not possible, so I’m going out and having external coffees outside, which is a fucking nightmare and a minefield.

A one-off sexual or romantic approach, as Mia describes here, can constitute sexual harassment; it does not have to be repeated. However, in this study, most of the situations interviewees described involved repeated incidents, whether targeted at others or at themselves. For example, Fern described sexual harassment from a colleague, at work:

We’d be having general work conversations [...]. Then he’d start telling me very explicit sexual stories about him with exes. And I’d just be stood there and like, “Wait, what? What is going on?” [...] That sort of thing was happening quite a lot.

This colleague also talked about Fern’s body in sexualised ways. At this point she started avoiding him at work. However, even avoiding him wasn’t enough to stop the harassment, as he then spread a rumour about her sleeping with another colleague.

Any one of these instances on its own could have constituted sexual harassment if the

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

effect of the behaviour was to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for Fern, or to violate her dignity. As a cumulative experience, not only did they have these effects, but they left her feeling trapped and distressed.

Sexual harassment can also affect those who witness sexualised behaviour in the workplace, not just those who are directly targeted. Georgie was a journalism student and had found her first work experience opportunity. Her host, a producer, behaved strangely right from the start:

One of his female work colleagues came in and the way they greeted each other was a little bit bizarre. As she came over, he grabbed her breasts, this was in front of me, and [...] the only way I can explain it was basically he was jiggling her boobs in front of me. [...] I just found that very bizarre, but I was like, maybe that's just the way that people greet each other in the workplace, as I was only 19.

This incident on its own constituted sexual harassment as Georgie witnessed this sexualised behaviour and it made her feel uncomfortable. This should have been a red flag which, if taken seriously by the employer and acted upon, could have prevented further harassment, as the producer's sexualised behaviour then continued:

There were things that just happened, like he would pull my seat closer to his. He would put his hand over mine every time my hand was on the mouse [...]. And then I left, and then I remember getting home, going into bed, and I had a message request on Facebook.

He had been talking about going to see the film 50 Shades of Grey and he started messaging her about this, detailing sexual acts he wanted to do to her.

Georgie commented 'I was so pissed off that he just took full advantage of the fact that I wanted to get into TV, and I felt so

upset that he just completely abused my trust'.

Both Fern's and Georgie's experiences show repeated behaviours occurring which should have been addressed much earlier, preventing further harm.

Sexual violence

Five interviewees were subjected to sexual violence including indecent exposure, sexual assault and rape. Interviewees described being groped, forcibly kissed, and touched in sexualised ways while at work or work-related events. One interviewee was raped after a work event by someone she had met there. Two had been subjected to indecent exposure, and several others were aware of indecent exposure occurring in their workplace to colleagues.

Victimisation

All four interviewees who described being subjected to victimisation – being treated less favourably as a result of being involved with a discrimination or harassment complaint – worked in journalism. This included:

- Being assigned the least desirable news stories to cover or losing access to work opportunities after attempting to report sexual harassment.
- A pay rise and funding for work-related trips/projects being withheld.
- Losing credit for their work.
- Being isolated from friends/colleagues.
- Colleagues stopping publicising their work on social media.

Victimisation and sexual harassment forced three interviewees out of their careers in journalism. One of these interviewees, Sarah, was forced out of their job and career after reporting harassment and supporting a colleague who was reporting sexual harassment. The enormous strain of the reporting process, and the victimisation

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

that accompanied it, led to her becoming suicidal and taking sick leave. Once her sick pay ran out, she found herself trapped. She asked if her line management could be changed so it wasn't being carried out by the person who she'd complained about. This was refused. After this, she knew there was no way back; not only had she lost her job but also her career. Isolated from her networks by the culture of silence and victim-blaming that occurred as part of her victimisation, she could no longer find work in journalism. She reflected that:

If I was to have brought a tribunal against them for harassment, it would have taken years to get to a tribunal. So, it would have been years on zero pay with me having to fund a lawyer. I'd have had to lose my house. So, in the end they offered me a settlement. I took the settlement. They gagged me with an NDA [non-disclosure agreement].

After she left, she found that several other women in her workplace had also been victimised in this way, also becoming suicidal as a result of reporting sexual harassment and being required to sign NDAs.

Proposals to tighten the law around using NDAs in sexual harassment cases were put forward in 2019.¹² Sarah signed her NDA more recently than this – but to date, while legislation has been passed prohibiting the use of NDAs in higher education for cases involving sexual harassment, this does not extend to other employers.

Sarah's experience reminds us that legislation to prohibit the use of NDAs for sexual harassment and discrimination cases is still urgently needed, as well as more robust measures to prevent victimisation by employers.¹³

Sites of sexual harassment and violence

Interviewees were subjected to sexual violence and harassment in a range of work-related settings, including:

- International industry events.
- Work social events such as wrap parties or social events put on by production company.
- Online work video calls.
- At work during meetings, for office-based roles such as editors, script development, journalists.
- During recruitment.
- On set, during breaks between filming.
- On social media or professional online platforms (private and public messages).
- On location, during rest days and during filming.
- In other interactions in the workplace.

Particularly risky spaces were work social events; filming on location; and international industry events (as discussed below).

Frequency of sexual harassment

Interviewees were asked whether these experiences were normal or frequent in their working lives. While sexual harassment was a frequent occurrence in some interviewees' experiences, this was not the case for everyone.

Seven interviewees described how, other than the one or two incidents they had described in interviews, they had not experienced any other sexual harassment. While some of them described 'inappropriate' behaviour at work, sexual harassment was not, in their experience, endemic in their working lives. These interviewees all worked in unscripted entertainment, drama, and documentary. Five of these interviewees had started in the industry in 2017 or later, and one was part-time only. Nevertheless, these accounts show that there are parts of the industry where sexual harassment is not normalised, and where it is relatively

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

unusual when it occurs.

Three other interviewees described location-specific sexism and/or sexual harassment and violence. This occurred on location, and at international industry events (as discussed in detail below), but in their day-to-day work, sexual harassment was not a problem.

Three interviewees had generally positive working relationships within often male-dominated workplaces. Despite not necessarily experiencing frequent instances of sexual harassment themselves, they were aware of this occurring often within the industry.

Finally, five interviewees, two of whom who had been in the industry for over 25 years, described endemic cultures within their various workplaces of sexism, gender discrimination, and sexual harassment, sometimes alongside bullying, particularly when they were younger. For one of these interviewees, this has mostly abated once she was over 40, but for another interviewee, who was in journalism, the sexism and sexual harassment simply changed as she got older to become sexist ageism. Two interviewees had left or been forced out of the industry as a result of the gender discrimination and sexual harassment. For all of these interviewees, when issues of sexual harassment or violence were raised or formal complaints made, these were dealt with inadequately or covered up, as outlined below.

Areas of the sector where interviewees described multiple instances of sexual harassment, occurring across workplaces, multiple times, over years or even decades, were high-end television and journalism. While it is important to be cautious with generalising from such a small-scale study, these findings deserve further exploration in future research.

Impacts and coping strategies

The continuum of sexual violence

The impacts that incidents of sexual harassment and violence had on interviewees cannot be understood in isolation. Instead, they need to be seen in the context of the range of sexually violent or harassing behaviours they had previously experienced.

Liz Kelly describes sexual violence as a ‘continuum’ in that one type blurs into another, and different types of sexual harassment and violence have common characteristics. Her research found almost all women had experienced multiple incidents of sexual violence in their lives, and that ‘the cumulative impact of a number of incidents occurring close together was an important aspect of [a number of women’s] experience’.¹⁴

In this study, many women interviewees discussed their experiences in relation to previous incidents of sexual harassment and violence. The incidents they recounted for this study formed a continuum with wider experiences that they had had during their working or personal lives. In this way, for many interviewees, incidents occurring in the workplace were not isolated incidents but formed part of the tapestry of gender-based violence that they had experienced, or that they were aware of.

This wider ‘continuum’ is important in making sense of the impacts of sexual violence and harassment. One interviewee, Sienna, described how sexual harassment and violence is a ‘constant’ for her, it’s ‘not a worrying outlier, it’s the norm.’ As a result, for her, workplace sexual harassment and violence were triggering of previous experiences, including of rape. Similarly, as Hannah described:

I think the whole incident in itself got me thinking about other incidents, not at work but during my teens and early twenties of

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

men – always men – saying inappropriate things, saying things that made me feel uncomfortable or afraid or just a bit scared for my safety as well as other things boys my age have done that have made me feel, “Actually you’re not a nice guy”.

By contrast, some interviewees noted that what they had been subjected to at work wasn’t as bad as previous incidents, and therefore hadn’t impacted them as much.

The impacts outlined below need to be understood, therefore, as relating to this wider ‘continuum’ of sexual violence, as well as simply the immediate incidents discussed in interviews. These impacts are divided into emotional/personal impacts, and career impacts, but these two categories could blur into one each other.

Emotional and personal impacts

One emotional impact that several interviewees described was ongoing feelings of shame or self-doubt. Sienna described how ‘I’m sort of carrying round this feeling of fear and caution, but also shame. I don’t think I can tell people this without me feeling like I did something wrong’. Similarly, Roz explained that:

Even though I’ve spoken to this therapist and worked through it. I still have these doubts. Like, did I do something not quite... did I do something wrong or have I misinterpreted? Or if someone told him that I was saying this right now, would he just be like laughing and think that I’m crazy?

Fear and panic attacks were also described by some interviewees. As Zoe observed:

By the end of the job I was genuinely frightened and scared to be on my own with this person. And, just to explain the impact it had on me after I finished the job, maybe three years later – I didn’t see or speak to this person after the job apart from one time when they messaged me and I ignored it – and then three years later I just saw them on a job, so they just randomly came in to do a daily on a job

that I was doing and the shock of seeing them again just made me ... I just started shaking uncontrollably and I was crying and I actually had to leave work.

Four interviewees said that the sexual harassment they were subjected to hadn’t had much, or any, impact on them. Three of these were women who had been in the industry for at least 20 years. Stephanie commented that ‘there’ve been other things in my life that have had much more of an impact on me by men’s behaviour, which is why I think that maybe this hasn’t.’

For Chloe, while being targeted by a trusted colleague affected her deeply for about a year afterwards, it was the response from her employer that affected her most:

That was a horrible, horrible evening and the only thing I can describe it as is hideous, but what I think hurt me the most was then the response afterwards, and it was the treatment I got after.

Career impacts

As well as emotional impacts, many interviewees described the impacts of sexual harassment and/or victimisation on their career. These included:

1. DIRECT CAREER IMPACTS

a) Losing work, for example having to leave a job after being subjected to sexual harassment or violence.

This could include losing skills development opportunities. For example, Freya reported a freelancer who had sexually harassed her. After she reported him, the company told her they wouldn’t work with him again. But despite this, they hired him for one more shoot, for a story that she herself had found, as they said they needed him to gain access to the site. Freya didn’t want to work with him again – and this meant that she lost this work opportunity which would also have been a development opportunity for her. Not only that, but as a ‘safety’ measure, the company ensured that they hired a male producer to work with him and

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

didn't offer the work to any women.

This could also include losing networking opportunities, after deciding not to follow up contacts made at industry events with people who had groped, harassed, or assaulted them.

b) Losing their career and having to leave their sector.

This occurred to two out of the four interviewees from journalism; see Sarah's experience, above.

A second interviewee, Vanessa, left her profession as a result of sexual misconduct from her boss. As she described:

I started having regular panic attacks and as a result left quite quickly. Since at the time there weren't many/any jobs available in [my field] which suited my skill set, I decided to leave and now work [in a different role and sector]. I really love aspects of it, but it has been hard to leave journalism behind after working towards that goal for so many years. I want to go back to it, but my confidence has been knocked quite a bit.

A third interviewee who had studied journalism decided to move out of news and into a different area of television as a result of the sexual harassment she had experienced.

2. ADDED LABOUR OF DEALING WITH THE SITUATION LEADING TO CAREER IMPACTS

a) Trying to avoid the person who had targeted them.

For freelancers, this could be difficult as they wouldn't know who was working on a production until they turned up on the first day. Zoe commented that her experience 'has made me very paranoid about accepting work [...] At the start of the job you get sent the names of everyone working on the job and I always breathe a sigh of relief, it is fine'.

b) Planning strategies to handle the

situation.

As Annie described, 'every single hour of every day I was trying to figure out how to not just create a fantastic series, but how I was going to navigate dealing with this person. It took up all of my time'.

d) For those who went through a formal reporting process, the time taken up by going through this process.

e) Colleagues (usually women) supporting those targeted.

Sometimes interviewees relied on colleagues to support them, for example in the immediate aftermath of an incident. Interviewees expressed concern about the impact on these colleagues, particularly when they were supported by someone more junior than them or someone they line managed.

3. INDIRECT IMPACTS THAT AFFECTED INTERVIEWEES' CAREERS

a) Losing confidence in their own ability.

The impacts on confidence were one of the heaviest legacies of sexual harassment for some interviewees. Abby summed up the broader impact of being subjected to multiple incidents of sexual harassment and violence as:

heavy, relentless and exhausting. And time consuming. I'd spend so much time thinking and talking about this [...] professionally and personally, it's trashed my confidence a lot of times. It's made me feel very like just disrespected. I feel very disrespected by a lot of people, and it takes a lot of energy and effort to walk back into the world every day, being like, "I am capable, I do deserve this job, I don't just have it because they feel bad for me or they fancy me, or they have some sort of weird complex that they need to save me." I have to every day be like, "I deserve to be here." And I know for a fact that the men in the company who perpetrate this do not feel like that, and

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

I'm angry.

b) *Feeling wary of men or being unable/less able to network with men (whether those men who had targeted them for harassment or violence, or men in general).*

c) *Trying to implement stricter professional boundaries at work.*

This could include being less friendly and being more wary of drinking alcohol with colleagues.

However, this response was at odds with the requirements of the job for those in roles such as runners or producers. Verity, a producer, commented that 'your job in TV is to be friendly', but this created the problem of 'men misunderstanding you being friendly for something else'. Attempting to uphold clearer professional boundaries also created a conflict for those in roles where they needed to network, and where making new contacts, socialising and drinking alcohol are an integral part of the culture.

d) *Damaging working relationships or trust in their organisation.*

e) *Avoiding pitching content relating to sexuality, in case this led to further harassment.*

f) *Negatively affecting their enjoyment of their work.*

g) *Changing privacy settings on social media.*

This could affect networking opportunities.

h) *Concerns about victimisation.*

i) *Avoiding working for smaller companies, in an attempt to avoid the type of situation in which they had been targeted.*

j) *Feeling vulnerable at work.*

k) *There could also be wider impacts on the working culture and on colleagues' trust in their workplace. As Vanessa described:*

for other people in the [team] who have

found out, it's quite disillusioning. I think there's a lot of colleagues who feel disgusted and quite disillusioned and at a loss. And it's affected their day-to-day working lives. So, I mean, even for people who have just found out about it, they now feel kind of quite awkward and uncomfortable and nervous in certain situations, I think.

These career impacts were only described by women interviewees, not the male interviewee; sexual harassment does also impact men, but it is disproportionately women who are affected. They demonstrate the ways in which sexual harassment and violence could affect women's careers in myriad ways, both overt – such as losing your job or career – and more subtle, such as affecting the types of content it feels safe to pitch. Further research is needed to assess the cumulative impact over time of these subtle, as well as overt, impacts, on women's career development.

Coping strategies

Interviewees adopted a range of strategies to help them cope with their situations. These included:

- Support from colleagues.
- Talking to family and friends.
- Learning to recognise problematic behaviours earlier.
- Therapy or coaching (in some cases interviewees obtained this privately, in other cases it was provided by their workplace).
- Going to the media.
- Reporting (as discussed below).
- Going to the police.

For Abby, therapy was arranged and paid for through her workplace, and 'genuinely it was brilliant'. Leila reflected that, after coping with ongoing unwanted sexual attention, 'I can spot the signs early

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

on next time and deal with it'. Georgie stated, 'I knew I had eight weeks left or whatever at the time, and I was like, "I'm just going to do the work, and just carry on and leave." And that's exactly what I did.' Chloe went public with her experience and described the response from other women as 'incredible'. Many women contacted

her to tell her that they had had the same experiences – in some cases at the same company as her – or came forward to tell her, 'We support you. We're here for you if you ever need anything.'

- Overall, this part of this report has demonstrated that while sexual harassment or violence at work was not a normal experience for many interviewees, for others, it occurred frequently. Furthermore, sexual harassment was, in many instances, not recognised or enabled to continue, rather than being identified and addressed.
- The impacts were broad-ranging and affected interviewees' personal as well as professional lives. Three interviewees had to leave their jobs or careers, and others lost work. Other career impacts included losing skills development and networking opportunities, the added labour of dealing with the situation, and losing confidence.
- These experiences of sexual harassment and violence occurred within an industry that has high levels of gender inequality, and Part Two examines how this context enabled sexual harassment and violence to occur.

PART 2: HOW GENDER INEQUALITY WITHIN THE INDUSTRY ENABLES SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Patterns of gender inequality in the industry

Gender inequalities contributed to creating workplace cultures that supported sexual harassment and violence to occur. The workplaces or settings where sexual harassment or violence took place were almost all described as being gender unequal, in different ways.

In addition, all of the people described as carrying out sexual harassment or violence in this study were men. This gendered pattern shows that it's important to move away from a pattern of individuals behaving badly ("bad apples") towards understanding how some workplaces enabled sexual harassment and violence (and other forms of discrimination) more than others. Furthermore, while some interviewees had the impression that it was only older men who were carrying out sexual harassment and violence, this was not the case. While many of those described as carrying out sexual harassment were older, there were also several examples of men in their 20s and 30s engaging in these behaviours.

To understand how gender inequalities enable sexual harassment, we have to look at the two main ways in which gender inequalities in the workplace occur:

- Vertical gender segregation. This occurs when men and women are doing similar

roles, but men dominate in senior positions and women (and often gender minorities) are concentrated in junior positions.

- Horizontal gender segregation. This occurs when men and women are clustered in different job roles, i.e. a division of labour along gender lines. In the screen industries, women were more likely to be working in the office rather than on location, and more likely to work in costume, art, or production coordination, while men were more likely to be in roles such as director, props/set design, and behind the camera.

These two forms of gender inequality could occur together; many interviewees described workplaces with both horizontal and vertical gender segregation.

These inequalities do not directly cause sexual harassment and violence, but they enable it through creating cultures where sexism, sexualisation of women's bodies, or sexual harassment and violence are normalised and accepted. And, as outlined below, there can also be other factors that enable sexual harassment and violence to occur.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Types of workplace culture

Six types of workplace culture relating to gender inequality and sexual harassment were identified. The six broad types of workplace culture can be summarised as follows:

- **Gendered power dynamics where men hold the power** (e.g. male-dominated management).
- **Gendered division of labour** (e.g. women doing the admin, men dominating 'creative' roles).
- **Gendered harms are obscured, ignored or invisible** (e.g. being told 'it's harder to report this than ignore it').
- **A supportive culture exists despite clear gendered inequalities** (e.g. an understanding boss).
- **Other workplaces hierarchies or risk factors enable sexual harassment** (e.g. hierarchies between 'talent' and crew).
- **The culture is actively anti-sexist** (e.g. with clear anti-sexist policies that are workable and implemented).

These cultures could overlap, and so sometimes two or more of these cultures were present in the same workplace. The cultures shaped the gender relations in the workplace; whether and how sexual harassment and violence occurred; and how disclosures and reports were handled.

These cultures also shaped how bystanders reacted to incidents. 11 out of the 18 interviewees described at least one incident that occurred in public, such as at a work social event or in front of contributors. In such cases, reactions from bystanders could be very important in how interviewees experienced the incident. They could also determine whether the harassment was allowed to continue or not. These workplace cultures are discussed in detail below.

Gendered power dynamics

In this workplace culture, vertical gender segregation contributes to a culture of sexism and sexualised abuses of power.

In these workplaces, people in positions of power were more likely to be men, and they were able to use their status and seniority to perpetrate sexual harassment and violence, or to create a culture where this was able to occur. This type of gender inequality enabled sexual harassment to occur most commonly when a male boss or man in a position of power targeted a more junior woman.

Male bosses, company owners or more senior male colleagues were named as the person perpetrating the harassment or violence in nine incidents in this study. Sexually explicit comments coming from a male boss or superior could be particularly humiliating, demeaning and upsetting, even for women in relatively senior positions.

Vertical gender segregation could contribute to different types of gendered cultures, for example:

- Jokey, informal cultures where humiliating gendered jokes were accepted.
- Cultures where women were sexually objectified or assumed to be sexually available.
- Intimidating environments where women were subjected to gendered bullying and sexism.

A particularly stark example of an intimidating environment came from Annie. She described how a senior man on a production she worked for created a culture of 'toxic masculinity' within their male-dominated workplace:

I noticed that once a lot of the men, especially the men higher up, realised that that kind of behaviour was totally not just ok but encouraged, that other men [...] who worked at that company felt free to

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

be complete arseholes, shall we say.

This contributed to a culture where this toxic behaviour was targeted at everyone – not just women – but along gendered lines whereby women were treated differently, often in threatening and demeaning ways. For example, her senior male colleague:

would do things like talk about hiring prostitutes. A bit like he's ordering a pizza or something, you know? How cheap are they? How do you get them the best. And do it right in front of me in an intimidating way. And I'm sitting there and I've actually, in all the time [previously in my career] felt, even though guys were always hitting on me, like always, I never felt intimidated. I never felt physically threatened ever. Even guys trying to get in my hotel room. I'd be like, "Oh go away, you're drunk," you know, and just laugh it off. I never ever felt physically threatened.

[In this situation] I felt physically threatened, really physically threatened. I mean, I was scared. I know that sounds ridiculous because we were at a dinner table. But the way that it was being said with other people there. God, it makes me really upset to talk about it, actually. I thought I was the only one that noticed how aggressive it was towards me, like physically intimidating as a woman. But [a male colleague] said, "Are you ok?" And I went, "I'm fine," because he looked so shocked. I didn't know what to say, I didn't know what to do.

The culture that enabled this behaviour to occur – in public – was set by senior men in this company. Other examples of vertical segregation leading to gendered abuses of power were less overt than this, but could still be deeply humiliating and harmful.

Toxic cultures could sometimes also occur where women were in positions of power. Some interviewees recounted senior women minimising and/or covering up sexual harassment perpetrated by their male colleagues. Alternatively, senior women could be targeted for harassment,

victimisation, or bullying themselves, especially if they attempted to speak out. This shows that gender equality, while it is crucial, is not sufficient to create a culture free from sexual harassment; there also has to be an actively anti-sexist (and anti-racist, anti-discriminatory) culture.

Gendered division of labour

In this workplace culture, horizontal segregation contributes to a culture of sexism and sexual harassment.

Horizontal segregation, where men and women are clustered in different job roles, was described by many interviewees. For those in male-dominated job roles this could mean that a culture of sexism and sexual harassment – whether overt or subtle – was normalised. For women (and likely for sexual and gender minorities in these roles) working in male-dominated roles, this could create a culture where sexual harassment and sexism was an everyday part of the job.

While there might only be one person carrying out the sexual harassment, this could be enabled by a culture where this behaviour was not challenged. This could also occur where people were working with contributors where a sexist or sexualised culture was accepted or normalised. Olivia, who was a bystander to sexual harassment that a colleague was subjected to, described how:

He was making comments on her appearance, making sort of weird, lewd suggestions about her in front of the contribs [contributors]. Like some comments about her arse or something. And the people we were following are all men. So, it was easy to feel like the only woman in the room because you are genuinely the only woman in the room.

However, horizontal gender segregation also meant that there were women-dominated areas. While women could sometimes minimise harassment – for example, as a coping mechanism – women-

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

dominated spaces could also create areas of female solidarity where women supported each other to stand up to sexual harassment and abuse.

For example, Zoe described a workplace characterised by both vertical and horizontal segregation, where the costume department was women-dominated. When a male actor was harassing women in their team, the male producer, as she described, ‘was sort of excusing it. He was saying “Oh I am so sorry that he said that to you, but also you know he is of that generation.”’

As a result, the women on the crew collectively took action in solidarity with a colleague who had been harassed:

We then all refused to look after him – [the harasser] was in his costume by that point, but the women on the crew – it was his last day as luck would have it – but we just refused to go near him for the whole day.

Similar incidents of female solidarity were described by other interviewees. It was clear that despite the risks of gendered divisions of labour, it also had potential to enable collective action.

Gendered harms are invisible

In this workplace culture, gender inequalities create a context where sexual harassment is minimised or not recognised.

For example, some interviewees described sexual harassment occurring in workplaces where the culture was not sexist or sexualised, despite high levels of vertical and horizontal segregation, and where they were respected and liked many of their male colleagues. However, even in such positive working environments, vertical and horizontal gender segregation could create a context where people failed to recognise or act on sexual harassment.

For example, Fern described how her male colleagues:

all knew that something had happened, even if they didn’t know specifically exactly what it was. And I kind of hoped

that someone would be like, “Oh mate, stop being a dick to the girls because you’re making them feel uncomfortable,” in the hope that maybe it would be more of a, you know, like when your peers tell you off and it pulls you into line, kind of thing. [...] And they were supportive, as in they understood why I didn’t talk to him, and they tried to make sure that we weren’t alone together and stuff and they were great in that respect. But none of them supported me in a way where I [could] go and do something about it.

In some cases, male colleagues apparently didn’t notice the behaviours that their women colleagues were experiencing even when they were semi-public. Vanessa described how:

Recently more guys [among my colleagues] have found out and have been really supportive, really lovely, said “What a prick, this is disgusting, we’re so sorry it happened.” But what I struggle to believe is that they didn’t notice anything before.

This type of culture could be very confusing for interviewees, if they saw their colleagues were trying to be supportive but it was nevertheless insufficient to address the situation they found themselves in.

A supportive culture exists despite clear gendered inequalities

In this type of workplace, there is a culture of active bystanders and proactive responses to sexual harassment.

This corresponds to a few of the workplaces described – mainly by more junior interviewees – that were characterised by vertical and horizontal segregation, but where supportive peers and bosses acted on harassment when it occurred. In such workplaces, there was a culture of active bystanders where people actively raised concerns when they witnessed or became aware of harassment, or collectively took action to stand up to it.

However, such supportive cultures tended to be reactive rather than proactive (as

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

opposed to ‘anti-sexist cultures’ described below). Furthermore, supportive actions from bystanders or managers were not necessarily sufficient to stop the harassment recurring or to ensure there were strategies and expertise in place to address such situations.

Other workplaces hierarchies or risk factors enable sexual harassment

In this workplace culture, aspects of workplace culture or forms of discrimination other than gender inequality enable sexual harassment or violence to occur.

Sometimes these factors occurred alongside gender inequalities, and sometimes they occurred separately. These factors could also explain sexual harassment and violence targeted at men, or where this occurred in women-dominated workplaces. The main factors that occurred in this study were:

- Some job roles being valued more than others.

The most common example was ‘talent’ being valued more highly than other employees.

Sexual harassment carried out by male actors towards crew was described by several interviewees. When this occurred, it was minimised and excused.

- Isolation due to working on location.

For some interviewees, working on location meant working in pairs or small teams where harassment could occur more easily, and it was difficult to get out of situations where it was occurring.

- Sexualised cultures at work.

‘Sexualised cultures’ are workplaces where talking or joking about sex at work, including in explicit ways, was normal. These were especially likely to occur in situations where informal networking and partying were taking place.

Sexualised cultures could also exist alongside gender inequality.

- Other forms of discrimination or marginalisation created hierarchies in the workplace.

Race, neurodivergence, disability, and sexuality, as well as other forms of discrimination, could create hierarchies where some people were valued more than others. This could affect how sexual harassment occurred or was responded to.

Anti-sexist culture

In this workplace culture, an actively inclusive, anti-sexist culture is created.

This was not described in any of the workplaces where sexual harassment or violence occurred. However, three interviewees described working for, or trying to create in their own organisations/teams, actively anti-sexist cultures. Steps they described included:

Proactively hiring women for senior roles in order to create gender equality.

Creating spaces and running training to address racism and other inequalities.

Proactively tackling ‘low-level’ incidents immediately after they occurred.

- **Part Two has outlined how gender inequalities created a context that enabled sexual harassment and violence to occur. These different cultures also shaped the ways in which people in the workplace responded to sexual harassment and violence, and whether or not interviewees felt safe to speak up – as explored in Part Three.**

PART 3: REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT & VIOLENCE: BARRIERS AND CATALYSTS

Disclosing and reporting sexual harassment or violence

In this section, disclosing refers to telling someone at work about the incident(s) of sexual harassment or violence. Informal reporting refers to telling someone in a line manager or other responsible role and asking them to address the issue in ways that don't involve instigating a workplace investigation. Formal reporting refers to reporting where the employer opens up an investigation of the behaviour.¹⁵

It's often assumed that television and film workers – especially those in freelance roles – don't report sexual harassment. However, in this study, most people did disclose their experiences to someone at work, and some also made – or attempted to make – formal reports.

All but one of the people targeted for harassment disclosed what had happened to someone at work. All but three disclosed to someone in a position of responsibility. However, the response from the person they disclosed to influenced whether or not they decided to report, i.e. to ask for action to be taken on their disclosure. There was often an ongoing process of decision-making around reporting, rather than a simple yes/no decision. A series of steps could lead interviewees, in some cases, to formally raise concerns with their employer. Figure 1 outlines this series of steps.

Figure 1: Steps taken by interviewees towards formal reporting

1. Informally speaking to family, friends, or close colleagues.

2. Taking steps to protect themselves and handle the behaviour such as avoiding or confronting the harasser.

These steps were often ineffective in stopping the harassment or in making the interviewee feel safe or feel that others were safe.

3. Informally disclosing to a line manager and asking them to take action.

This sometimes resulted in effective action being taken. However, in other cases, the action taken was inadequate or made things worse.

4. If informal reporting was ineffective, interviewees sometimes had to take further steps such as:

Attempting to make a formal report.

Threatening to leave the production if the issue wasn't dealt with.

Going to the police (if the behaviour constituted a criminal offence).

Leaving the job.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Reasons for not reporting

While the majority of interviewees in this study did disclose or report their experiences in some way, they had often previously decided not to report. In some cases, they told someone in a position of responsibility informally, but chose not to take a formal reporting route. This meant they stayed at levels one or two of Figure 1, above, rather than moving onto steps 3 or 4. Reasons for non-reporting were:

1. SEXUAL HARASSMENT WAS NORMALISED OR TOLERATED IN THE WORKPLACE.

This could include harassing incidents occurring in public, as discussed above. If the person/people to whom the incident would be reported were present during incidents of sexual harassment and did not react, if they were visibly friendly with the harasser, or if they themselves were carrying out the harassment, interviewees assumed there was no point in raising concerns. As Sienna explained:

I think with [...] the kind of casual “You are so beautiful,” or, “I want to kiss you,” or touching your arse [...] – in those little moments, in public, all of that experience as a whole is why I’ve done what I’ve done and never said anything, because if a lot of men in serious positions are casually, you know, like that in some way, what chance have I got for any kind of understanding or sympathy or justice [if I report]?

Sexual harassment could also be normalised by women as well. For example, women in line management positions sometimes told interviewees that similar behaviours had happened to them, or were normal. Annie described telling her head of production about the bullying and harassment that she and her team were being subjected to, ‘And she just said, “Well, that’s your job, to put up with that. That’s the kind of thing that you have to put up with”’.

2. BELIEVING THAT NOTHING WOULD BE DONE AND/OR THEY WOULDN’T BE SUPPORTED IN REPORTING.

For several interviewees, their knowledge of how previous incidents had been dealt with in their workplace affected their decision not to push for a formal report. Kate, who had worked in journalism for several decades, described examples of the response from Human Resources (HR) staff – both in her current and previous workplaces – when employees (including herself) had raised issues of sexual harassment and bullying. In her experience, HR had failed to protect staff who spoke up, sometimes with devastating consequences. As she commented, ‘whatever the systems say, the reality is completely different: you work in a little unit, you work with people sat around a big desk, there’s no way that you raise these things with HR and it goes away’ (see also the section ‘The role of HR’, below).

Even when managers were sympathetic, their responses did not necessarily build trust in interviewees. Abby had disclosed to her boss an incident of sexual assault that occurred during a work event, and was then directed to someone else in the company:

I then had to explain the entire thing again to [a senior member of staff], and she handled it quite badly by then telling me an anecdote about someone else who’d had a similar experience in the last year, and how awful it was. And so I ended up just saying, “God, I’m so sorry, I’m so sorry that happened to that person,” and it totally just threw me that somehow I was then taking on the trauma of someone else’s situation, and also that it was handled badly and I was like, “Right, ok, well, I obviously don’t want that to happen to me.”

As Abby’s experience shows, responses to disclosures could encourage or discourage people from reporting, as they would judge from this initial experience whether it was

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

safe to go further with reporting.

More generally, what was described as the ‘gossipy’ nature of working in television meant that interviewees were often aware of previous incidents of sexual harassment or violence during productions, and how they had been handled. Even though interviewees usually only had imperfect knowledge of such incidents, this awareness still played a role in their reporting decisions.

3. NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE ABOUT REPORTING OR NO-ONE TO REPORT TO.

For a few interviewees, non-reporting was related to not knowing how to report or who to report to. For Roz, who didn’t tell anyone at work about ongoing sexual harassment and bullying from her boss, there was no-one at all to raise concerns with in the small indie production company she worked for; the only other senior person in the company was very close to her boss who was harassing her.

Similarly, Sienna commented that ‘I wouldn’t have even been remotely aware of what to do’ if she had decided to report any of the times she had been subjected to sexual harassment or violence at television industry events (see section below on ‘Sexual violence and harassment at TV and film industry events’).

4. INTERVIEWEES HAD PREVIOUSLY EXPERIENCED AND/OR REPORTED SEXUAL HARASSMENT/VIOLENCE.

For some interviewees, having previously experienced and/or reported sexual harassment/violence meant that any further incident(s) triggered trauma responses. They were primarily focused on trying to cope with this trauma response rather than thinking about next steps.

Not only that, but if multiple incidents of harassment or assault occurred within a short timeframe, for example at an industry event or through being targeted by

different colleagues in the same workplace, sometimes people felt that it wasn’t clear which of the many incidents they should report.

Finally, in some cases, having previously reported or disclosed to the same workplace or colleagues meant that interviewees felt that their credibility would be in question if they reported further instances. As Mia described:

I also have a very deep worry that, as I think anyone does when they report a sexual assault or a sexual harassment, the more you report, the less likely you’re going to be believed. [...] being like, “Ok, well if I have two on record, what happens next time? Are they going to be like, “Gosh, this girl just can’t get enough of reporting shit?” That’s the genuine fear I have.

5. INTERVIEWEES FELT COMPLICIT; THAT IT WAS THEIR FAULT; OR THAT IT WASN’T SERIOUS ENOUGH TO REPORT.

As noted above, all of the incidents described by interviewees clearly met the legal definition of sexual harassment. Despite this, interviewees described being unsure whether the incidents they had experienced were serious enough to report, sometimes agonising over this decision. Furthermore, sometimes the harassment escalated slowly, and it was unclear at what point to raise concerns; doing so too early risked a response where interviewees’ concerns were not taken seriously, but leaving it too long meant that they could feel like they were complicit since they hadn’t raised any issues earlier.

This could be particularly difficult when interviewees described feeling as though what had happened was in part their fault. This response is common for women who are subjected to sexual violence and harassment, due to societal ‘rape myths’ that perpetuate ideas that women who are subjected to sexual violence are to blame for this.¹⁶

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Sometimes this sense of being to blame occurred on occasions where there was a lot of alcohol present and the interviewee had been drinking. Interviewees described free alcohol being provided by employers at work social events or at industry events, and in some cases the harasser or their colleagues providing drugs. For some interviewees, alcohol became a 'catch-22' situation: drinking is normal and expected, and it would be difficult to avoid drinking in some of these workplace social environments, but having been drinking when they were harassed or assaulted made some interviewees feel like they had done something wrong.

6. THEIR WORKPLACE HAD WIDER DISCRIMINATION ISSUES, A TOXIC CULTURE, OR DIFFICULT WORKING CONDITIONS.

Some workplaces that had endemic issues with bullying, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination, where it could feel futile or terrifying to try and report anything. Three interviewees described trying to report within such workplaces, where sexual harassment or victimisation was carried out by bosses within the company.

Two further interviewees described needing to report sexual harassment in situations where bullying, racism, or other forms of harassment were also occurring. Fern was being bullied by the line manager she needed to report to, and Zoe's line manager was dealing with racism. These other issues meant they were reluctant to raise the issue of the sexual harassment they were dealing with.

For those working on location, there could be other challenges, for example, Freya described that:

I didn't want to tell [my employer] at the time, but that was mostly because I was stuck on a boat with this guy and I was already having a terrible time [...] And I didn't want them to then... because there was so much, it wasn't even just the

harassment. [...] I didn't want the office to call and then me to be stuck on a small boat with someone who's really angry at me for complaining back to base about him.

These wider issues within the workplace made it more difficult to report sexual harassment, and to get action taken if concerns were raised.

7. INTERVIEWEES FEARED LOSING THEIR JOB, LOSING WORK OR DAMAGING THEIR REPUTATION IF THEY REPORTED.

There is a lot of discussion in the industry and in research of the role of reputation for workers in television and film (as well as other creative industries). This concern was also present among interviewees for this study, some of whom talked about not wanting to be a troublemaker or not wanting to make a fuss. Several had fears for their own, or colleagues', jobs if they reported; it is important to note that this wasn't limited to those on freelance contracts but included permanently employed staff. For freelancers, if they were near the end of a job, they might choose to try and cope with the behaviour until they could get out.

Leila was working as a runner when she experienced sexual harassment from a younger colleague. She decided not to report as she was nearly at the end of the job, even though her bosses 'wanted me to, they encouraged me to report, it was me who didn't want to make a fuss'. Nevertheless, this experience changed her mind; she stated that 'next time I am going to make a fuss.'

8. INTERVIEWEES WERE BLOCKED OR DISSUADED FROM REPORTING.

Six interviewees tried to make a formal report, only to have it handled informally or to be blocked or they were dissuaded from reporting. This occurred in a variety of ways, including:

- Being told they could only report things

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

that have happened to them directly.

- Being told it would be a difficult or 'bruising' process to make a formal complaint.
- Not being told, or being unclear on, the difference between a formal and informal report, and therefore not realising that they had not made a formal report.
- Being discouraged from reporting by their head of department/boss.
- Being told that the harasser might lose his job as a result of the report.

These actions were sometimes well-meaning, for example coming from a friendly colleague who was trying to smooth things over. But sometimes they could indicate that any potential complaint was going to be covered up, as in Sarah's experience:

I look back and I realise probably even that informal phone call to [my bosses to raise concerns] was a mistake because they turned around to me and said, "Oh look, it would be very bruising if you raised this formally. You know that, right?" And I said, "Oh ok," and I kind of read between the lines, [and] didn't raise it formally [at that point].

Reasons for reporting

However, as noted above, most interviewees in this study did report or at least tell someone at work what was happening. Understanding the reasons why people speak out about sexual harassment or violence can help to create an environment that supports this. The main reasons that interviewees gave for reporting or telling someone at work were:

1. TO PROTECT OTHERS:

- To prevent the perpetrator targeting others in future, especially younger/

more vulnerable women.

- Because the interviewee knew that others had been targeted as well as themselves.
- Stephanie, an actor, commented that 'I'm quite body confident and confident in myself. I think, "God, if someone was just out of drama school and they were 20, that might make them never want to work again". That's the main reason I complained, actually.'

2. BECAUSE THERE WAS A CULTURE OR NORM OF SPEAKING OUT:

- Because others were speaking out, or there was media coverage relating to people speaking out within their industry/workplace. For one interviewee, media coverage of Operation Yewtree (a police investigation into abuse by television entertainer Jimmy Savile) influenced her decision to report her experience.
- Hannah described how she was working with a junior crew member 'and I said to her, "If anything happens you should tell someone", and I'm thinking, "If I'm telling her to tell someone, why am I not doing that?"'

3. TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE IN THEIR ROLE/JOB, OR TO GET HELP HANDLING A DIFFICULT SITUATION:

- Because the interviewee was likely to end up working with him again.
- In order to be able to continue in the role/job.
- To try and avoid having to work with the perpetrator again.
- To get help with handling a difficult situation, or because the situation was escalating.
- Fern described how 'I kept joking [...] just to try and make light of it in the hope that I'd get over it. But by the afternoon I was so upset, I remember

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

being on the phone to my husband crying about it because I was just like, “I don’t know what to do anymore”. Like, this is the point now where I can’t escape it.’

4. BECAUSE SOMEONE ASKED, NOTICED, OR WAS AVAILABLE

- For example, if they bumped into the person they would need to report to.
- If a bystander noticed what was happening.
- Because someone asked them about the situation. Vanessa described how her colleagues had raised concerns with their manager about their boss who had harassed multiple women. ‘That’s when I got a call from the manager saying, “I found out about this whole thing that’s going on and I need to investigate it informally internally and see how serious it is”. So, I spoke to him.’

Confronting the person carrying out the harassment

Four interviewees spoke to the harasser directly and asked them to stop the

behaviour or explained why the behaviour was problematic. None of these efforts were effective in getting the harassment to stop or getting him to understand why his behaviour was problematic.

- In one case the harasser offered a long list of justifications. For example, he apparently said that one of the women he had targeted had been abused and he was showing her that sex could be healthy.
- In another case the harasser told an interviewee, Stephanie, that it was a misunderstanding. Afterwards she described how ‘I felt horrible. I felt really dirty and I just felt like he’d got away with it’.
- In a third case, the woman who had been receiving unwanted attention ended up apologising to the man who had been harassing her after he became upset.

In general, it is not appropriate – and can be dangerous – to suggest that people subjected to sexual harassment speak directly to the person/people carrying out the harassment.

- Part three has outlined the reasons why interviewees stayed silent – and also the reasons why many of them eventually spoke up. Understanding the reasons why people speak up about sexual harassment or violence can help to create an environment that supports and makes it safer to do so. In workplaces where there was a culture or norm of speaking up, it was easier for interviewees to do this. However, as the next section explores, it wasn’t always safe to do so.

PART 4: EMPLOYERS' RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

Guidance on reporting sexual harassment in the workplace

In 2017, the BFI produced guidance on handling reports and disclosures of sexual harassment in the screen industries.¹⁷ All of the incidents described in this research took place after this guidance was produced. The ways in which these incidents were handled by employers reveal that many employers still have a long way to go to ensure that this guidance – which is aligned with their legal obligations¹⁸ – is being followed.

In order to illustrate the range of responses that interviewees received if they reported, this section first describes a positive employer response, as a good practice example. It then describes the responses that interviewees would have liked to have received. These ideal responses are then contrasted with what actually happened when they reported within their workplace, focusing on whether they were satisfied with the response, action taken as a result of their report, and good and poor practice in employers' responses to reports.

Interviewees' ideal responses from employers

Good practice needs to take into account not only legal obligations, but also what those targeted for sexual violence or harassment need. This means that we need to listen to the responses that those targeted for harassment would have liked to have seen from their workplaces.

Responses should, however, be shaped by the specificity of each situation. The ideal responses discussed below cover a range of scenarios – from sexual harassment that was described as 'mild', to rape or sexual assault – and therefore there are a range of responses outlined. This variety shows that there isn't necessarily a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, a range of options need to be available in order to balance the wishes of the reporting party with the need to uphold appropriate standards of behaviour across the workplace.

The responses or provisions that interviewees would have liked from their workplace were as follows:

TO TAKE THEIR CONCERNS SERIOUSLY.

- This could include an acknowledgement that what has happened is unacceptable and shouldn't have been happening.
- Reassurance that action would be taken to prevent the behaviour from recurring and/or from impacting others.
- To meet with the interviewee and take

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

their concerns seriously. As Sarah described, ‘to reassure me and to say, “We respect you, we think you’re brilliant, you’ve never made a complaint like this before. I’m really sorry that you feel this way and let me deal with it and come back to you,” like a grownup’.

FOR THE PERSON THEY REPORT TO KNOWING WHAT TO DO AND HANDLING THE SITUATION.

- A quicker response where male colleagues took the red flags seriously.
- Support with reporting to the police.
- The situation being escalated to HR (or whoever has responsibility for behavioural standards in the workplace) to formally investigate, rather than being dealt with informally.
- Knowing how to report and what the process involves.
- Receiving a detailed response to their complaint, including whether the harasser had been fired or not and why/why not; and information on future protocols to prevent these behaviours.
- For Mia, ‘I would have reported it to my line manager, who would have said, “I’m so sorry that happened to you. Don’t worry about you having to do anything. I’ll go and speak to HR, and we can come up with a plan for how you want to handle this. Leave it with me.”’

NEVER TO HAVE TO SEE OR WORK WITH THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE AGAIN.

- Sienna was unsure what her ideal outcome was, but it would involve never to have to see the men who assaulted her again.
- Olivia, who was a bystander to a colleague’s complaint, found herself pressured into working closely in a one-on-one role with the person accused of sexual harassment. She reflected that ‘I

would have really loved for them to say, “We respect your concerns. You won’t have to work with him.”’

FOR THE HARASSER TO KNOW THE IMPACT OF HIS BEHAVIOUR ON THE PERSON/PEOPLE TARGETED.

As Roz described:

“I think for my own sanity I would have just liked for it to have been put to him. [...] I just would like for him to know the impact that his words and his behaviour, it’s a huge impact actually, that it had on me and my life for, I’ve got two kids that I’m trying to [bring up], and I was just in a rotten place for a really long time. And it really affected our family life. And so, I wouldn’t say it to his face, but I would like for him to know the impact of his behaviour on me.

FOR THE HARASSER TO BE REHABILITATED, TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY, AND/OR TO RESIGN.

- Kate would have like the harasser to resign once he had had the severity of the situation explained to him (rather than having to go through a formal investigation process to reach this outcome).
- Annie commented that ‘I’d like him to go to a good rehab clinic and maybe a meditation retreat. And maybe, yeah I’d like him to sort himself out.’

FOR THERE TO BE CONSEQUENCES FOR PEOPLE WHO BEHAVE IN THIS WAY.

- Interviewees had mixed views on when and whether the harasser should lose his job. In some cases, particularly where there was an abuse of power or a pattern of behaviour, many interviewees thought that harassers should lose their jobs.
- More commonly, interviewees simply wanted there to be consequences for

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

this kind of behaviour.

TO RECEIVE AN APOLOGY FROM THOSE WHO LET THIS HAPPEN OR WHO VICTIMISED THEM, AND TO BE THANKED FOR COMING FORWARD.

- Apologies from the harasser were, for many interviewees, not appropriate. Georgie stated that rather than an apology from the older, more senior man who had harassed her, she would have liked apologies from his colleagues who let it happen. However, when she experienced a one-off incident of sexual harassment from a colleague close in age to her, she felt an apology would have been appropriate.
- Hannah explicitly stated she didn't want an apology from the much older actor who harassed her; this was after a situation where she had heard that colleagues in her workplace had been offered an apology from him after an incident of indecent exposure.
- Sarah commented that she would have liked those who come forward to be thanked for doing so. As she reflected, 'what is wrong with a world in which victims are thanked and protected and [someone says], "You know, that was really brave of you, and we are all on the same page. We want to make this place safer."'

Overall, interviewees wanted structures and staff in place who had an understanding of how to handle sensitive situations safely. This would mean that when they raised concerns, these would be taken seriously, acted on, and if necessary recorded, with ongoing patterns of behaviour identified and addressed.

Employers' handling of reports and disclosures

The discussion now turns to examining what happened in responses to reports

and disclosures, drawing on interviewees' descriptions of this. All interviewees except one told someone at work about what had happened. In two instances, however, the interviewee only told one close friend/colleague at work, in order to obtain immediate support after the incident, and did not disclose any further. This means that 15 interviewees described a situation where someone disclosed or reported in order to get action taken to address a sexual harassment situation.¹⁹ As Figure 2 explains, informal actions were the most common outcome of reporting.

Figure 2: Actions taken as a result of reports

Eight cases: informal action taken

Actions included:

- Sending the harasser to rehab.
- An informal discussion with the harasser telling him to change his behaviour.
- Changing the interviewee's job role so that she was less vulnerable to harassment.
- Telling the harasser he was not allowed to be in the same work spaces as the interviewee or ensuring they didn't work together.
 - In some cases this involved ensuring that the harasser only worked with other men, for example putting together an all-male crew to work with a particular actor or opening up a work opportunity to men only.
- Telling a third party who was responsible for the harassment that he wasn't allowed on set unless invited.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Four cases: harasser not rehired

- Where the person responsible for the harassment was a freelancer, he was not rehired for further work.
- In none of these instances had a formal report been made.

Four cases: no action taken

- In one case, the interviewee didn't want action taken, but she did want the behaviour to be recorded and kept on file as it was part of a pattern of behaviour that had been previously reported. She was not given any indication that this would happen – and indeed storing disclosures in this way is not common practice – but she felt that it was important to notify senior staff on the production.
- In two cases, after a poor response to their initial disclosure, the interviewee didn't take it any further and there was no follow-up from the employer.

Two cases: no information shared

- In these cases, the

interviewee who reported was not given any information about what action had been taken as a result of their complaint (this outcome is in fact compliant with existing guidance; see Appendix for further details).

The most common type of action taken was informal action. Sometimes, informal actions were taken where interviewees had wanted a formal rather than informal response, while in other instances they had preferred an informal response. However, out of the types of informal action taken, the final one – ensuring the person responsible was not allowed on set unless invited – was the only one that was effective or satisfactory for the interviewee.

The other informal actions taken were either ineffective, failed to address the behaviour adequately, or led to victimisation, i.e. treating someone badly because they have made a complaint of harassment. For example, in one case the interviewee, Vanessa, had asked not to be in the same room as her boss who had sexually harassed her. She then found that she was unable to access skills and career development opportunities as a result. Not only that, but he didn't adhere to this condition, and she eventually had to leave her job – and her career.

Furthermore, one type of informal response was to arrange for harassers to work solely with other men, not with women. This creates further discrimination, which could amount to victimisation. Disbarring women from parts of the workplace is not an appropriate way of handling sexual harassment reports. It results in those being discriminated against – in this case women – bearing the cost of harassment, rather than those responsible for the harassment.

Overall, it can be seen that the actions

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

taken were aligned with what interviewees wanted only in a minority of cases.

A good practice example

An example of a response to a report that appeared to follow good practice guidance closely came from John, the only male interviewee in the study. John was a runner in his 20s who had been sexually assaulted by another male runner during a social event organised by the production company they were both working for. He realised that two other men in his team had also been targeted by the same person. The fact that this had not been a one-off incident made him decide to report it. He felt that someone needed to raise this pattern of behaviour with the person who had targeted him.

There had been information in the 'starter pack' from the production company he was working for about who to contact if he felt uncomfortable about anything. After thinking it over and discussing with friends and family, a few weeks after the production ended, he sent a Whatsapp message to the production coordinator to ask what he should do. He was asked to put the information about the incident in an email, which he did. As he described:

a few days later, I got an email from someone. I think they're the head of HR [at the production company] wanted to talk to me about it. We organised a call. They were very good about it. I just called them, told them what happened. They said how they're taking it very seriously and I said to them I don't know if I want [the person who assaulted him] to be fired or anything. I just know they need to have this conversation. And they said that even though that might be my wish, it's kind of out of my hands. That makes it sound, it wasn't in an aggressive way. It was, "as a company we take this very seriously and so we might decide that we just don't want to work with a person who does this.

So, we will have that conversation with them." But it's not up to me how they get punished, which I completely understand and get.

They tried to call him a few days later, but he missed the call and decided not to pursue it:

I was kind of just done with it at that point. I didn't like thinking about it. I didn't like talking about it. The longer I had to think about it, the worse I felt about it and it felt good to talk to someone and tell someone and know that it was being sorted. So, at that point I just didn't care and wanted to move past it. [...] And I just wanted to wash my hands of it, and that's what I did.

Overall, he thought the production company handled the complaint 'perfectly'.

I felt very heard. They took their time. They made sure I was ok and was comfortable talking about it. I never felt pressured in any way, I never felt like they were pushing for a certain answer or something like that. All very professional, all very well done.

There are various elements of good practice that can be drawn out from John's experience:

- Information on how to report was shared in advance of starting work.
- There was a relatively prompt response to his complaint.
- His employers took action even though the contract had ended. This is particularly important for freelancers, who may often find themselves in the situation of having to report behaviour that occurred on a contract that has ended.
- They took his complaint seriously and did not minimise or excuse what had happened.
- They were sensitive in listening to his account, and made sure he felt heard.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

- While they listened to his preferences for what should happen, they told him it wasn't his responsibility to make a decision about what actions would be taken as a result of his complaint; instead the company took responsibility for upholding their standards of behaviour.

No other interviewee felt as positively as John about the response to their report or disclosure. It is important to reflect on the fact that the only male interviewee in this study was also the person who felt most satisfied with their reporting experience. It is clear, from John's description, that his report was indeed handled well. However, he noted that this was the first time he had experienced anything like this, and therefore for him, this experience was not part of the wider 'continuum' of sexual violence and harassment that many women interviewees described (as outlined above). Nevertheless, he was still concerned about reporting, and took some time to come to the decision.

His report was also more straightforward to handle than those of some other interviewees, as he was reporting a junior freelancer rather than someone in a position of power or status, and he reported after the end of a contract rather than during it.

Overall, this example demonstrates the existence of good practice occurring in responses to sexual violence and harassment. Some other interviewees also experienced aspects of good practice, but there was evidence of significant gaps and failures in how reports were handled.

How satisfied were interviewees with how their report/disclosure was handled?

Leaving aside those who didn't disclose to someone in a position of responsibility,

around half of interviewees were dissatisfied with how their report was handled, and half were either satisfied, or felt satisfied with some elements of the handling and not others.

Three interviewees were satisfied with how their report/disclosure was handled.

- All three of these interviewees were in their 20s and were in relatively junior roles, and didn't want formal action taken.

Five interviewees were somewhat satisfied with how their report/disclosure was handled, or felt that there had been some good practice even if there were also problems.

- These mixed feelings were often due to the fact that, although their employer had taken action, this was not necessarily adequate. Either there had still been negative consequences for the interviewee; or it was difficult to get action taken; or the action taken showed 'hypathy' (as defined above) or solidarity with the person responsible for the harassment.

Eight interviewees were unsatisfied with how their report/disclosure was handled.

- This response was due, in some cases, to the severe consequences for interviewees and lack of consequences for the person responsible for the harassment/assault.
- Unsurprisingly, the three interviewees who described reporting in toxic workplaces found that reporting did not do anything to address the endemic problems.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Do freelancers face particular barriers to reporting and/or getting action taken?

Out of the 18 interviewees in this study, 10 were freelancers (usually on contracts a few months long, although in some cases shorter), one was employed on a short-term contract and one was a student on work experience. 6 interviewees were on permanent or ongoing contracts (in one case renewed on a rolling basis).

As table 1 shows, freelancers were slightly more likely than non-freelancers to report or disclose sexual harassment or violence at work (with the exception of informal reporting). Freelancers were also slightly more likely to be satisfied with how their report or disclosure was handled.

With a small sample, these findings are not conclusive. Indeed, they contradict the views of some interviewees that freelancers are less likely to report sexual harassment or violence in the workplace, and that it is riskier for freelancers to do so. Previous research suggests that freelancers are more likely than permanently-employed staff to be subjected to sexual harassment.²⁰

Freelancers are also more likely to face the issue of trying to report sexual harassment that has occurred in a previous (rather than current) workplace. Nevertheless, these findings show that many freelancers are speaking out about their experiences; this may be a shift in recent years due to changes in culture. Further research is needed to build on these findings.

Good and poor practice with handling reports and disclosures

The cultures of gender inequality outlined in Part Two played an important role in shaping how employers and colleagues responded to reports, for example by minimising what had happened – or by taking it seriously and acting quickly to address it.

There was evidence of good practice in handling reports or disclosures. For example:

- Being told that the harassing behaviour is unacceptable.
- Interviewees being given clear options and asked what action they would like.
- Reaching out to others to ask anyone to

Table 1: Reporting behaviour across freelancers and non-freelancers

	Total number of interviewees	Told no-one/ only a friend at work	Disclosed but did not report	Informal report, get action taken	Attempted to formally report	Formal report
Freelancer/work experience	12	1	3	3	3	3
Non-freelancer	6	2	0	4	1	1

Table 2: Satisfaction with report-handling across freelancers and non-freelancers (omits bystanders and those who did not report/disclose)

	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Unsatisfied
Freelancer/work experience	3	2	5
Non-freelancer	0	3	3

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

come forward with concerns (this can be done without naming the accused party).

However, there were also many problems arising in informal handling of sexual harassment reports. These were often caused by failing to take the issue seriously. These are summarised below, with further detail on problems arising and links to good practice in the appendix.

- Those handling reports sometimes minimised the sexual harassment, failed to take it seriously, and/or failed to recognise that sexual harassment/violence is unlikely to be a one-off incident but may recur. This could also include failing to take action if an accused party violated requests to avoid the reporting party or to change his behaviour.
- Those handling reports sometimes relied on ‘rape myths’ and ‘himpathy’ in handling reports. ‘Rape myths’ are false beliefs about sexual violence shaped by sexism and other prejudices that deny, downplay, or justify sexual violence (and sexual harassment). ‘Himpathy’ is a form of misogyny that involves ‘the excessive sympathy sometimes shown towards male perpetrators of sexual violence’ which ‘contributes to insufficient concern for the harm, humiliation, and (more or less lasting) trauma they may bring to their victims’.²¹ (see further discussion in the appendix).
- Those handling reports failing to draw on specialist advice where needed.
- Reporting parties were sometimes dissuaded from making a formal complaint to the employer, or dissuaded from reporting to the police.
- Employers sometimes failed to take action on receiving a report.
- In at least one case, the employer attempted to handle reports individually,

even when there were multiple people targeted.

- Some interviewees described a lack of support/advice during the reporting process and/or lack of communication.

The problems identified here with formal and informal responses to sexual harassment reports need to be understood in the context of gender inequalities in the industry, as introduced in Part Two. Contexts where gender inequalities create a culture in which gendered harms are invisible are a particular risk here, as the wider working relationships might be relatively positive, but the workplace may be unequipped to handle sexual harassment (despite legal requirements to have measures in place in this area).

More generally, it can be seen that more expertise and understanding of sexual violence and harassment is needed across the industry in order to improve handling of reports. This need is not specific to the screen industries; across all workplaces, such upskilling is taking place.

The role of HR

One of the reasons why freelancers in this study felt more at risk of sexual harassment was that, in some cases, they had no access to HR staff to support formal reporting processes. However, in other cases, HR staff from the employing company or from a parent company, were involved in freelancers’ reports or disclosures. HR involvement was sometimes helpful, but for many interviewees, HR staff either didn’t know what to do or were actively involved in covering up any issues raised.

Eight interviewees described HR involvement in handling sexual harassment cases. In four out of these cases HR made the situation worse or assisted with covering it up. In two cases they were described as professional, sensitive and

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

helpful, and two further cases they did not take any action or appear to have any particular expertise.

Overall, HR staff were not generally able to provide what interviewees needed to support dealing with harassment, reporting, and/or handling reports.

Interviewees needed, first of all, advocacy and support so that they could talk through their options with someone who understood sexual harassment and violence and would take the issue

seriously. Secondly, they needed systems in place, staffed by people with appropriate expertise, which would enable options including to intervene and talk to people about their behaviour; monitor patterns of behaviour over time to be able to document serial harassment or abuse; and carry out formal investigations where necessary. HR staff and structures did not, in most cases, appear to be able to carry out these functions.

- **Part Four has outlined the responses that interviewees received to their reports of sexual harassment and violence. It has explored the actions taken following reports, including how satisfied reporting parties were with these steps. It is particularly notable that freelancers, in this sample, were slightly more likely to report, and to be satisfied with how their report was handled, than permanently employed staff. One explanation for this surprising finding could be that, since the 2017 #MeToo movement, there is more of an imperative to speak up about sexual harassment. The final section of this report explores this possibility.**

PART 5: APPROACHES FOR ADDRESSING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND CHANGES SINCE #METOO

What's changed since #MeToo?

Interviewees for this study have an important perspective on changes in the industry since #MeToo as they had all experienced and/or reported sexual harassment at work since 2017. Just over half the interviewees had been in the industry both before and after #MeToo and were also able to reflect on changes over time. This included the visibility of mechanisms in the workplace to prevent and address sexual harassment, as outlined below.

Often, discussions of anti-sexual harassment initiatives in the screen industries since #MeToo focus on intimacy coordinators.²² However, this initiative was not in place for, or appropriate to, the situations any of the interviewees in this study found themselves in. There was only one actor in the sample; she was subjected to verbal sexual harassment and unwanted touching from a member of the crew while she was playing a dead body. Intimacy coordinators were not in place for this situation. However, she would have liked the option of a woman crew member for setting up intimate or sensitive scenes, and/or having a witness in place during these scenes.

More generally, interviewees described some positive changes since #MeToo, but

also new risks and backlash.

In general, positive changes that interviewees described since the 2017 #MeToo movement were:

- Changes in attitudes, in that people know that this behaviour is not ok anymore.
- To some extent, attitudes appear to be shifting among younger men in the industry; men are more aware of these behaviours as problematic.
- Some interviewees described being more confident to speak out about their own, or others' experiences of harassment.
- There have been small changes in the right direction, such as hiring more female producers, but change is very slow.
- In some workplaces, there are more initiatives in place to address this issue, and there is some sense that concerns are more likely to be taken seriously.

However, interviewees' perceptions of new risks and backlash included:

- Harassers now know they have to be more discreet, and so are carrying on their behaviours, but more carefully.
- There is a backlash in some workplaces, whether this is in a 'jokey' way, or takes

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

a more aggressive tone.

- While there was initially a lot of discussion of sexual harassment when #MeToo broke, it has now died down.
- Attitudes among male leaders remain, in some parts of the industry, misogynistic.
- There is still significant gender inequality in the industry, which creates a context that enables sexual harassment and violence to occur.

Finally, a small group of interviewees identified the risk that people are being encouraged to speak out about harassment and abuse, but then are punished or victimised when they do so. This makes the industry more dangerous than prior to #MeToo. As Chloe described:

From my point of view, it felt like what [#MeToo] did was made [companies] scared and maybe want to hide stuff. It didn't have a response of, "Oh, we need to change things," it just made women more confident in coming forward, but there was no change in [supporting women when they came forward], no, no, absolutely not.

Similarly, for Sarah:

The slogans without accountability are so dangerous. Because if you didn't have the slogans [encouraging people to speak out], you wouldn't be tempted to believe them. Say nothing. Stop the rubbish on the website about what kind of an employer you are. Just say nothing. Just say we make news. [...] I mean it's not a solution, but what you would stop getting is women coming forward and [...] self-immolating over these values. Because that's all that happens. It's just, you just rub victims out.

This trend was particularly commented on by interviewees in the news industry, where news organisations were hunting out stories about sexual harassment in other sectors or industries, while failing to address the harassment occurring in their own organisations. One interviewee

even described her boss commissioning a story from her on sexual harassment, while he himself was engaging in harassing behaviour – failing to see the connection between his own behaviour and the story he was commissioning. As Kate, an experienced journalist, commented:

My sense is that it stops at the office door. All this stuff about exposing it, calling power to account, harassment in the workplace: we will brag endlessly about how we're exposing it in the outer world but we know we can't do it in our own newsrooms.

Overall, interviewees described a contradictory picture with some positive change, but also backlash, and new risks emerging. Around half of interviewees thought that little has changed in the industry since #MeToo in addressing sexual harassment, despite increased support in place to address mental health issues.

Perhaps the overall change in culture can be summed up as people feeling a greater sense of responsibility for speaking out about harassment when it occurs to other people, i.e. as a bystander. As Zoe described:

Every single job [I've worked on], someone gets sexually harassed. It is also every single job that someone patronises me, because of gender. So yes, I think it is still very prevalent. [...] But, I think the difference is people maybe feel they can call it out more, but maybe they don't because this girl [a colleague who had disclosed sexual harassment to her], that job was only two years ago and she didn't feel able to come forward. I didn't feel able to come forward when something was happening to me.

So, I think the difference, the main difference I have noticed in myself is that it has made me feel more able to call it out when I see it in other people. I am much more willing to be like, "Are you ok, can I help you, let's report this," which I never used to do – I just used to sort of

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

sympathise with them and say “Oh I am so sorry, that guy is a creep,” but I would never think of taking it further. Whereas now I am much more prepared to be like, “No, they have to listen,” because I do feel there is this awareness that this shouldn’t be happening, that there didn’t used to be.

This shift in culture sounds positive; it suggests that there is an increase in active bystander behaviour where people will intervene if they are aware of sexual harassment occurring. This is in line with some – but not all – the accounts from other interviewees. However, Zoe only felt safe to call out sexual harassment when it was happening to others, not necessarily when it was her own experience. As a result, there is a risk that people now feel a moral imperative to report, but that it still doesn’t necessarily feel safe to do so. This could lead to situations where people feel they have to speak out, whether or not they feel safe to do so.

What initiatives were visible within workplaces for preventing and addressing sexual harassment and violence?

Part Four described responses to reports of sexual harassment and violence in the workplace. But prevention is equally, if not more important. Indeed, immediately after the 2017 #MeToo movement, the British Film Institute (BFI) published A practical workplace guide for the prevention of bullying, harassment and racism in the screen industries.²³ Its recommendations included, for example, to ‘promote the set of principles, policy and process’, by ‘mak[ing] them visible everywhere and consciously includ[ing] them where relevant, such as call sheets, team meetings or the first day of a project, festival or production’.

In order to understand what kinds of

initiatives were in place within the industry, interviewees were asked what initiatives they were aware of for addressing sexual harassment, both in the workplaces where they had experienced or reported this, and in their working lives more generally. Their responses, as outlined below, suggest that there is a long way to go to ensure that these prevention practices are being implemented.

Initiatives to prevent or address sexual harassment

In the workplaces where interviewees experienced or reported sexual harassment, seven out of 18 interviewees said they weren’t aware of any initiatives or mechanisms in place to address sexual harassment. Five further interviewees said that sexual harassment was mentioned in their employment contract, in a policy, there was a staff representative, or the commissioning company had a mechanism for raising concerns, but these mechanisms were not appropriate or helpful for their particular situation.

More generally, across their wider working lives, half of the interviewees said that across all of the workplaces they had worked in since 2017, they were not aware of anything in any, or most, of their workplaces to tackle this issue. Even when they were asked directly about training, codes of conduct, reporting apps, or wellbeing facilitators to address sexual harassment, they were unable to think of initiatives such as these. Of course, it is possible that these initiatives were in place, but interviewees were not aware of them. Nevertheless, if they were invisible, then this shows that they are not being publicised or proactively shared.

For example, Roz, who worked in factual entertainment in small regional companies, said that ‘I’ve had quite a few contracts since [#MeToo] and I’ve never seen [sexual harassment] as part of a contract or as part of a sort of introduction meeting or I’ve never come across any kind of protocol

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

ever’.

Similarly, Zoe estimated she had worked on around 40 productions since the 2017 #MeToo movement, and only in one of those had there been any visible mechanism to address sexual harassment and bullying.

Common initiatives to tackle sexual harassment include wellbeing facilitators, training, helplines, and policies. These are explored below.

Wellbeing facilitators and staff representatives

A wellbeing facilitator is a third party, highly trained presence on set whose role is to ‘advise producers and heads of department on how to prevent stress and mental health issues and meet their legal duty of care to the crew and cast’ and to ‘robustly support all crew and cast with their own mental health and wellbeing on set.’²⁴

In one workplace, Zoe described a wellbeing facilitator who was on set three days a week to make sure everyone was ok. Zoe was being bullied on that production, but decided not to speak to the wellbeing facilitator because he was very friendly on set with the person who was bullying her. She commented that:

he could tell I was having a hard time because he saw me in tears one day and he just said if you ever need to talk to me, you can talk to me [...] I nearly spoke to him, and then I was like, no! Because I could see him getting on with people that I thought were being mean to me. That was an actual physical presence of someone, which is very rare, I have never been aware of someone like that before, but I didn’t necessarily feel it was helpful because I ended up quitting the job, actually. I couldn’t cope, and... I didn’t speak to him about it.

Two other interviewees, both in permanent rather than freelance roles, also described staff representatives in their workplace. These were employees who, on top of their

day-to-day work, were also designated as people who concerns could be raised with. However, in neither of these instances were these roles effective in addressing harassment.

Overall, it seems that there is more work needed to ensure that staff representatives and wellbeing facilitator roles are effective.

Training

Six interviewees had taken part in training to address bullying and harassment or said that this issue had been mentioned in general health and safety training. The training offered appeared to vary greatly in terms of quality, scope, and depth, and interviewees had varying perspectives on its quality and effectiveness. Sometimes the coverage of sexual harassment was limited to the mention of ‘inappropriate behaviour’ as a line in a general training video, without naming or defining sexual harassment directly.

By contrast, three interviewees described compulsory interactive training; in one case this involved discussion-based training seminars at start of production where attendees had to discuss how they would respond to different discrimination or bullying-related scenarios. While some interviewees commented that those attending their training did not take it seriously, most thought that while this was not sufficient to tackle these issues, at least it contributed to setting appropriate standards of behaviour for a production.

Training should be in place as part of a wider programme of work in this area; however, the purpose, design and content of the training needs to be carefully considered. In addition, sexual harassment and violence need to be explicitly mentioned and described, rather than referred to as ‘inappropriate behaviour’.

Helplines

One commissioning channel had an anonymous helpline in place. This was

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

included (albeit in very small print) on call sheets, and anyone working on a production commissioned by this channel could use it. This helpline was mentioned by three interviewees. For Annie, despite the helpline being anonymous, it still felt too risky to use it in case her voice was identifiable:

Everyone on our team talked about calling it. But everyone's too scared. They're just worried that they're going to be identified and that they'll never work again.

However, a second interviewee, Zoe, did use it to raise an issue unrelated to sexual harassment that she had observed on set, which she was concerned about. She called the helpline and was asked to email a written account of what had happened. She then spoke to someone on the phone about her account who thanked her and told her they would speak to the production team on the show and find out why this had happened, and to make sure it didn't happen again. She was not given any further information, but she understood that the executive producer had apologised to the actress involved.

She was satisfied with this outcome. Indeed, it was in contrast to the response from her head of department who had discouraged her from reporting the incident to the producers.

Another interviewee, Verity, had also considered using the helpline. She commented that 'I think if I had to, I would have [used it, but] I felt that it would be unfair on my team to immediately go to the big guns'. Instead, she eventually managed to resolve the situation informally. She noted that it was unusual to have this in place, and she liked the fact that it was there.

This initiative should be standard practice for broadcasters and commissioning companies. It needs to be available in different formats, including online, to overcome fears that people had of their voices being recognised, and it needs to

be more widely publicised along with the examples of the actions that have been taken when concerns are raised.

Other examples of good practice

One company rewrote their bullying and harassment policy after an interviewee reported. A few interviewees noted that the commissioning company had support in place, such as counselling or HR services and in one case, an anonymous online reporting platform.

Companies where there were more progressive initiatives in place were rare. However, one interviewee described a very positive experience working for a women-led company who were proactively trying to create an inclusive environment.

Line managers' perspectives

Three interviewees were also in line management roles and in some cases had to handle complaints, including those of sexual harassment.

In line with wider research in this area²⁵, these line managers had not had any support, training guidance on how to handle sexual harassment.

Annie, an executive producer, had devised her own process for dealing with complaints in order to handle issues raised with her. She had never had any training or support in this area, including from HR staff (as discussed above). She commented that production companies tell people that:

if this happens [...] you need to tell your superior. But I'm everyone's superior on my team and no one's told me what I'm supposed to do, you know? I've just figured it out.

It is not surprising, then, that poor responses to reporting were occurring for many interviewees.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Sexual violence and harassment at TV and film industry events

One area where interviewees were not aware of any mechanisms in place to address sexual harassment and violence were large international industry events. One interviewee, Sienna, had been subjected to multiple instances of sexual harassment and violence at international industry events, including rape. As she described:

Since the last event where something happened, I have been doing a lot of like self-reflection on what happened and the infrastructure of these big events that bring this whole melting pot of the global industry together. There's thousands and thousands of people in this space with a lot of booze and pent-up, I don't know, desire to network and meet, but also very little almost structure or rules or accountability or anything like that.

I'm not really aware of people that do these events sober. It's not like, "Right, I'm here on business so I'm not going to drink," it's like, "I'm here on business and this is really fun and this is the time that we can let our hair down and party". I've had some amazing traction for new connections in that environment because you just get used to each other very quickly and you let your hair down. It's not comparable to doing half an hour Zoom meetings.

I've no idea what the infrastructure is for like safety and wellbeing or reporting anything. There's the immediate collateral damage of being at the event and then suddenly, [when something happens], am I out of my meetings all day and having to go and talk to police? I don't know how prevalent this is for other women or people at these events, but there's no guidebook or rulebook or anything out there. I would be very surprised if at any kind of industry event there was anything

[such as a code of conduct, a complaints process, harassment advisors or support with reporting].

I know that if I wanted to come forward enough I could have done, but I wouldn't have even been remotely aware of what to do. There's also the case for men not [harassing or assaulting people] in the first place as well as all of the reporting processes, but there should probably be something from the event organisers between the police and you. I think maybe if it was a more female-heavy industry this would exist.

I now feel there's a bit of a dark cloud around that event. It's something that I love and I'm supposed to be going back [soon] and I am excited for it, but I think it will change my thoughts around drinking a lot. I'll probably be more wary of that. I will probably be quite scared to bump into [the man who had raped her]. And I think I will just take with me a feeling of paranoia and fear.

It makes me think, how much more can I take before it tips the scales of my fear and wariness and caution over new business prospects and opportunities and enjoying it? [...] Every event I'm at, do I then have to be really careful to not get raped or spiked or assaulted? I don't think men are worrying about that.

What should be in place at industry events to address sexual harassment and violence?

Recent high-profile scandals have highlighted the failures of organisations to tackle sexual harassment and violence. For example, in the UK, the Confederation for British Industry (CBI) came under threat of folding after it was revealed that it had failed to adequately address this issue.²⁶ Screen industries events organisers should learn lessons from these scandals. They need to assume that sexual violence and harassment are occurring on a regular basis at their events and implement a strategic approach to tackling it.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Most industry events will already have in place a code of conduct, but this is not sufficient unless its attendees are aware of it and feel confident to use it. Codes of conduct should give examples of sexual harassment and violence and include details about how to raise concerns via different routes (in person, via text, email, phone), including before the event starts and after it finishes. If a code of conduct does not include a process for raising concerns, then this means it is unlikely that people will report. They should also set out steps that can be taken on receiving a report, including informal measures to support attendees' safety during the event as well as formal complaints handling. They should outline what levels of confidentiality reporting parties can expect and explain what action can and can't be taken on anonymous or confidential reports. Staff who are contacts for receiving reports should receive training on how to respond to disclosures of sexual violence so that they are able to appropriately respond to and signpost those who come forward. Finally, the code of conduct should link to information on specialist support organisations as well as information on reporting to the police.

Good practice would include ensuring all attendees sign the code of conduct before or on arrival to signal their commitment to upholding it. Codes of conduct also need to be accompanied by wider cross-platform messaging to ensure that appropriate standards of behaviour are widely visible. Messaging should be informed by consultation with specialist sexual violence organisations to ensure it is appropriate and effective. One way of signalling that sexual violence is taken seriously would be to convene discussions at the event on tackling sexual violence and harassment in the industry and acting on the points raised. Good practice should also be adopted from existing initiatives to tackle sexual violence and harassment in the night-time economy.

Event organisers should regularly report on their strategic approach to tackling sexual violence and harassment – including number of reports received and handling of reports – to their Board of Governors or shareholders. Receiving few, or no, reports should be seen as an indication that their strategy is not yet successful, as this shows that attendees do not feel confident to raise concerns. This work should take place alongside a wider Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy that tackles other forms of discrimination and harassment.

Such practices will not stop sexual violence and harassment. But they will start to create an environment where it can be discussed and, if supported with robust action when reports are received, they will in time create a safer and more inclusive environment (as well as reducing risk of reputational damage).²⁷

CONCLUSION

Ten years on from the BBC's Respect at Work Review, and nearly six years on from the #MeToo movement, the UK film and television industry is still not upholding its legal obligations around preventing and responding to sexual harassment.²⁸ Legal obligations should be the minimum; to effectively prevent sexual harassment and support those targeted would go beyond this. But this minimum standard is not even being met. As a result, for those working in UK film and television, it is still not necessarily safe to speak up about sexual harassment. Nevertheless, there is cause for hope, as attitudes and workplace practices are changing, even if these changes are occurring unevenly across the industry.

Unsurprisingly, men are still engaging in sexual harassment and violence towards both their male and female colleagues. While this was not a regular occurrence for most interviewees, it still appears to be still relatively common. This harassment and violence – as well as workplace responses that frequently minimised this behaviour and failed to take it seriously – is enabled by the horizontal and vertical gender inequality that persists in the industry. And when it occurs, the impacts for many are distressing and sometimes devastating.

However, many interviewees were trusting their employers enough to tell them about their experiences, and in some cases, action was being taken to address these concerns. There was evidence of some good practice, but there is an urgent need to improve the ways in which reports and disclosures are being handled. In some cases, the actions to address the harassment were inappropriate, disempowering or harmful to the reporting party. Furthermore, there was evidence

that cases were sometimes being handled informally where this was inappropriate or went against reporting parties' wishes.

But in many workplaces, there was evidence that sexual harassment and violence – sometimes alongside bullying and other types of discrimination – were being allowed to continue unaddressed. In a minority of instances reports of sexual harassment and violence were covered up by employers, with devastating impacts.

Perhaps surprisingly, freelancers in this study were slightly more likely to speak up than permanently employed staff, and more likely to be satisfied with how their report was handled. This goes against the perceptions of some freelance interviewees who felt that they were less likely to be protected than permanently employed staff. This finding calls for more exploration.

An urgent area for action highlighted by this report is the relative paucity of mechanisms and processes to tackle sexual harassment in many workplaces. While a minority of interviewees described some positive initiatives including interactive training, half of the interviewees said that across all of the workplaces they had worked in since 2017 they were not aware of anything in place in any, or most, of their workplaces to tackle this issue. And two-thirds of interviewees said that in the workplace where they were involved in a sexual harassment reporting process or were harassed, they were not aware of anything in place, or existing mechanisms were minimal.

This is particularly concerning, as the biggest change that interviewees described as occurring since #MeToo was that people were more likely to speak out or

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

support others to speak out about sexual harassment. But this encouragement or imperative to speak out is not, in many workplaces, being accompanied by mechanisms to ensure that it is safe to speak out. Indeed, for two interviewees, speaking out came at a great cost, losing them not only their jobs but also their careers.

In discussing these findings, it is important to bear in mind that more than half of the sample were white middle-class women. Several interviewees commented that their accent, their education, their confidence, and their ability to negotiate upper-middle-class social norms meant that they knew how to speak up in a way that they were more likely to be listened to. The experiences outlined in this report are, therefore, likely to constitute the best possible outcomes for those who speak out about sexual harassment and violence. There is more work to be done to listen to the voices of working-class people, people of colour, trans and non-binary workers, and disabled people, not least as there is evidence that the some of these groups are more likely than others to be subjected to sexual harassment and violence in the industry.²⁹

The good news is that, while there are no simple, quick-fix solutions to address this issue once and for all, some of the changes that are needed are relatively manageable. One of the biggest changes that interviewees needed was for their colleagues and workplaces to take this issue seriously. This requires bystanders, managers, employers, and also broadcasters or commissioning channels to stop dismissing or minimising concerns and to accept that these behaviours need to be addressed, whether formally or informally. Resources from the Film and TV Charity set out the ‘Listen, Acknowledge, Act’ approach, as well as a three-tier approach to dealing with different levels of harassment at work. These resources can be used by bystanders, managers, people

targeted for harassment, and industry leaders, and should become standard across the sector.³⁰ Further details on approaches to tackle sexual harassment within specific workplaces are available in the [industry briefing](#) that accompanies this report.

The bad news is that this issue isn’t going to solve itself, as some interviewees hoped, through generational change once older men retire or leave the industry. While many interviewees did describe sexual harassment or violence from older men, others were targeted by younger men. Not only that, but the widespread gender inequalities in the industry create a context that enables sexual harassment and violence to occur.

Commissioning organisations and broadcasters need to take more responsibility for sexual harassment on productions that they have commissioned. Given their failure to date to do so, this should be incentivised through regulatory oversight. However, Ofcom’s statutory powers to promote equality of opportunity only relate to broadcasters and their direct employees, not to the commissioned production companies. This sets up an unequal playing field, whereby broadcasters are subject to regulation in this area from Ofcom but production companies are not. Ofcom state that ‘we encourage broadcasters to put in place an effective whistleblowing mechanism for freelancers working on their commissions, to ensure freelancers are able to report harassment, bullying or discriminatory behaviour.’³¹ Nevertheless, six years on from #MeToo, it is clear that the current approach is still failing employees, especially women. As such, new regulatory mechanisms need to be devised and implemented. These could include (but not be limited to) either Ofcom or a newly established body implementing requirements for broadcasters and commissioning channels to have minimum standards in place for

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

addressing sexual harassment (and other forms of discrimination) in companies they commission, and/or working with the Equality and Human Rights Commission to assess the provisions for addressing sexual harassment within broadcasters and the production companies they commission. This would help ensure the promotion and maintenance of equality of opportunity throughout the television supply chain as well as for broadcasters themselves.

Furthermore, legal redress for those subjected to sexual harassment at work is currently ineffective. Current long delays in accessing Employment Tribunals, as well as the lack of access to legal aid, are leaving those who speak up about sexual harassment in limbo. In addition, action needs to be taken to limit the use of NDAs in sexual harassment and bullying cases. These issues are not specific to the screen industries, but are part of a wider programme of work that is needed to address sexual harassment in the workplace. Further details on the regulatory work required in this area are outlined in the [policy briefing](#) that accompanies this report.

In the meantime, however, progressive change will be enabled through listening to the voices of survivors and others who speak out – including those in this report. Too seldom do we listen closely to what people targeted for harassment need from employers and the industry. Through listening to and learning from their voices, it will be possible to create workplaces where it will finally be safe to speak out.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE

Interviewees' recommendations for change

Before turning to a discussion of next steps for the sector, it is important to highlight interviewees' perspectives on what needs to change, as they have lived experience of attempting to tackle this issue on the ground.

There were three main themes in the changes that interviewees thought needed to be in place. First, changes to industry structures; second, changes in culture and awareness, including more bystander action; and third, better mechanisms in place within production companies for prevention and response to sexual harassment.

Industry structures need to change, including:

- Broadcasters being incentivised to hold production companies to account.
- Accountability and honesty about this issue.
- Consequences for harassers including dealing with serial harassers.
- Independent reporting options should be available.
- Top-down change from leadership.
- Employees should be able to give anonymous feedback on production companies.
- Mandatory minimum standards should be in place.
- The industry must diversify and tackle

gender inequalities.

- Proactive rather than reactive change needs to happen.
- Industry events must have infrastructure for support/reports of sexual violence and harassment.

Changes are needed in culture and awareness, including:

- Bystanders challenging comments.
- Taking reports seriously.
- Women (as well as men) not excusing this behaviour.
- Challenging sexism.
- Men being allies.
- Generational change.

Mechanisms for handling sexual harassment from employers/ productions are needed including:

- More/better training, including both wider diversity issues and sexual harassment specifically. This training should allow men to hear survivors' voices and perspectives.
- Better/more HR support.
- Formal rather than informal responses

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

- (for some interviewees).
- Employees always knowing who to report to in the workplace.
- Building on the good practice of using intimacy coordinators for sexual scenes, other sensitive scenes (such as where actors play dead bodies) may also need careful handling.
- Advocacy/support for reporting.
- Recording disclosures so that patterns of behaviour can be monitored and addressed.
- Ensuring women don't lose work when they report (see 'Career impacts' section).

Next steps

As noted in the conclusion, outside the screen industries, there are urgent issues to be addressed to ensure those reporting sexual harassment have timely access to Employment Tribunals and are not gagged with NDAs. **For more detail on these next steps, an industry briefing and policy briefing [are available](#) to accompany this report.**

The following steps are prioritised here as recommendations (outlined in more detail below):

- Broadcasters have recently announced their funding commitment to the establishment of the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA)³². **The streamers, production companies and studios must now also commit to funding and supporting CIISA's establishment.**
- **Training for managers** on how to handle reports of harassment **should be made accessible to all industry workers** – including freelancers – whose role includes responsibility for the wellbeing of others.
- In order to support cultural change across the UK screen industries, all employees and employers should engage with the Film and TV Charity's
- 'Listen, Acknowledge, Act' resources on addressing bullying and harassment at work.
- New regulatory mechanisms need to be explored and then implemented to require broadcasters and commissioning channels to have minimum standards in place for addressing sexual harassment (and other forms of discrimination) in companies they commission.
- **Broadcasters, commissioning channels and film studios should take more responsibility** for ensuring mechanisms are in place to address sexual harassment on productions that they have commissioned, as outlined below.
- **Industry bodies should support further research** to build on these findings, to illuminate particular issues identified.

Discussion of further steps that can be taken, including producing guidance on information sharing and collective grievances, can be found in the [industry briefing](#) that accompanies this report.

Further detail on these next steps are outlined below:

- **Broadcasters have recently announced their funding commitment to the establishment of Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA). The streamers, production companies and studios must now also commit to funding and supporting its establishment.**

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

This recommendation follows Philippa Childs' call in her letter to broadcasters and PACT (Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television) in September 2023.³³

- **Training for managers on how to handle reports of harassment should be made accessible to all industry workers, including freelancers, whose role includes responsibility for the wellbeing of others. Senior leaders should also look to recruit, retain and reward line-managers who create positive work cultures and display good people-management skills.**

BIFA (British Independent Film Awards C.I.C.) have developed Prevention and Intervention training. This course gives those in positions of responsibility the confidence and skills to handle incidents, allegations or reports of inappropriate behaviour.³⁴

ScreenSkills offer online training on dealing with bullying and harassment for anyone contracted or freelancing in a managerial position in HETV and unscripted TV.³⁵

- **In order to support cultural change across the UK screen industries, all employees and employers should engage with the Film and TV Charity's 'Listen, Acknowledge, Act' resources on addressing bullying and harassment at work.³⁶**

- **New regulatory mechanisms need to be explored and then implemented to require broadcasters and commissioning channels to have minimum standards in place for addressing sexual harassment (and other forms of discrimination) in companies they commission.**

For example, new powers for Ofcom could require them to promote equality of opportunity in the commissioning process.

As noted above, Ofcom's statutory powers to promote equality of opportunity only relate to broadcasters and their direct employees, not to the commissioning process.

This step would require legislation to extend Ofcom's remit. Steps that broadcasters and commissioning channels can take in the meantime are outlined in the next recommendation.

- **Broadcasters, commissioning channels and film studios should take more responsibility for ensuring mechanisms are in place to address sexual harassment on productions that they have commissioned:**

Broadcasters and commissioning channels (and where relevant, film studios) should require minimum standards to be in place within production companies they commission. Such standards could ensure a minimum level of compliance being evidenced in order to be able to bid for work. These minimum standards should be consulted on within the sector, but they might include:

- Organisations being required to have a policy (such as the BFI model policy) that

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

define sexual harassment and ‘harassment on the basis of sex’, and outline routes for informal and formal reports, including what action can be taken for each route. New starters should be given this policy, as well as details of how to raise concerns.

- Line managers being required to have had training on how to handle reports.
- Anonymous feedback on working conditions should be gathered and reported back to broadcasters.³⁷ While anonymous reports cannot usually be acted on, they can illustrate the working culture of an organisation, and they can highlight areas where proactive investigations are needed.
- A commitment that non-disclosure agreements will not be used for cases relating to bullying and harassment.
- Data on number of informal and formal reports, and outcomes of these, should be made publicly available annually (where numbers allow) or shared confidentially with broadcasters (where smaller numbers do not allow anonymisation for publication). For an example of an approach of publicly reporting data on numbers of informal and formal reports and outcomes of these, see the University of Cambridge’s annual report on student discipline.³⁸

All broadcasters, commissioning channels and film studios should have clear and accessible reporting mechanisms for staff working on productions they have commissioned.

- These should be available online (as well as by text or phone). They should include information on what to expect when using the reporting platform or service, as well as confidentiality options.
- Where harassment is reported concerning a senior leader or owner of a company, broadcasters/commissioning channels should investigate this directly.
- Broadcasters/commissioning companies should also investigate directly when a complaint is made about poor handling of a report by a production company, or when anonymous reporting data reveals a problem with workplace culture.
- Reporting mechanisms need to be independently evaluated in order to build trust and maximise their efficacy.
- Broadcasters/commissioning channels should publish annual data on the use of their reporting mechanisms, to ensure that there is public scrutiny where this mechanism is not being used or is ineffective.

Where minimum standards are not in place or where company owners/senior managers have upheld findings of harassment against them, they should be disbarred from receiving commissions for a period of time.

- A model for this is the National Institutes of Health in the US, which removes funding from researchers with upheld harassment complaints against them. Such action has been taken in relation to 54 sexual harassment complaints since 2018.³⁹

- **Industry bodies should support further research to build on these findings, particularly to explore:**

Sexual harassment in journalism and high-end television.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Differences and similarities between the experiences of freelancers and employed staff.

The cumulative impacts over time of sexual harassment on women's career development.

The experiences of workers in the industry from a wider range of backgrounds.

Changing experiences over time, including tracking improvements in industry responses to this issue.

APPENDIX: DETAILED OVERVIEW OF PROBLEMS WITH HANDLING REPORTS

Table 1: Issues arising with handling informal reports

Problem	Examples and discussion
Reports being handled by people who are friends with the accused party	The Acas guide to Discipline and Grievances at Work does not explicitly state that grievances (i.e. complaints by an employee) must be handled by someone unconnected to the accused party. However, it states that 'employers should be careful to hear any grievance in a calm and objective manner, consider it impartially and be fair to the employee in seeking a resolution of the problem'. It also states that 'managers should consider arranging for someone who is not involved in the case to take a note of the meeting and to act as a witness to what was said'. ⁴⁰
Reports being handled without getting advice from HR	See section on 'The role of HR'.
Non-specialist support or counselling offered	It is good practice to ensure that specialist sexual violence or harassment counselling is available. If employees are being signposted to an Employee Assistance Programme, employers should first ascertain whether trauma-informed counselling with specialists in sexual violence is available. If not, then advice on specialist sexual violence support should be sought from Rape Crisis (for self-identifying women), The Survivors' Trust (for all genders) or Galop (for LGBTQ+ people).
Managers handling sexual harassment or assault complaints assuming that sexually predatory behaviour is caused by alcohol or drug use	Alcohol (mis)use may occur alongside sexual aggression, but it does not cause this behaviour. Indeed, alcohol use can be used as an excuse for engaging in socially unacceptable behaviour, including sexual assault. ⁴¹ Where employees are exhibiting both sexual aggression and alcohol/drug misuse, these behaviours need to be addressed separately.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

<p>Slow response to a disclosure or request for help</p>	<p>If someone in the workplace asks for help or for action to be taken, this request is likely to be time-sensitive. This is especially relevant if the person disclosing is working with the responding party, and/or the behaviour is ongoing. There may also be health and safety concerns to be addressed. Acas guidance states that employers should ‘handle the complaint as quickly as possible’.</p>
<p>Taking actions in relation to the accused party without doing anything to support the reporting party</p>	<p>In some cases, interviewees wanted their superiors to have a word with the person responsible for the harassment to try and get them to stop. In these cases, support is also needed for the person raising concerns, especially if this approach leads to an aggressive response.</p>
<p>Failing to take action when accused party violates the requests that have been made of him to avoid the reporting party or change his behaviour</p>	<p>As noted above, if informal actions are taken there is a risk that the person carrying out the harassing behaviour may become angry or aggressive and/or fails to follow the requests that have been made. In this situation it may be appropriate to escalate to a formal response. At the very least it will be important to discuss these issues with the accused party and make detailed notes of the discussion.</p>
<p>Minimising the sexual harassment, failing to take it seriously</p>	<p>There were multiple instances where disclosures of sexual harassment, and sometimes assault, were minimised and made light of.</p> <p>It’s important to remember that sexual harassment can be determined either by the purpose of the behaviour, OR by its effect. If the behaviour wasn’t intended to be intimidating, etc, it can still be sexual harassment if it was experienced in that way and if it is reasonable for the conduct to have that effect. The Equality and Human Rights Commission’s ‘Technical Guidance’ in this area states that:</p> <p>2.25 If the harasser’s purpose is to violate the worker’s dignity or to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, this will be sufficient to establish harassment. It will not be necessary to look at the effect that conduct has had on the worker.</p> <p>2.26. Unwanted conduct will also amount to harassment if it has the effect of violating the worker’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, even if that was not the intended purpose.⁴²</p>
<p>Failing to recognise that sexual harassment/ violence is unlikely to be a one-off incident but may recur</p>	<p>In some contexts, there is also evidence that sexual harassment or violence is unlikely to be a one-off behaviour, but rather that those carrying out such behaviours are likely to target multiple people and continue their behaviour. As such, it is important to assume that sexual harassment and violence will recur.</p>

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

Table 2: Issues arising with handling formal reports

Problem	Examples and discussion
Not being told they have the option to report to the police	<p>Chloe reported to the police after her employer handled the situation very poorly. The perpetrator was convicted of a criminal offence, and the employer had to terminate his role. This had not happened when she first reported it at work.</p> <p>Three other interviewees were aware of criminal sexual offences that had occurred in their workplace, and four further interviewees had also been subjected to sexual harassment that also constituted a criminal offence and chose not to report to the police. Their reasons for not reporting included being in a foreign country when the offence occurred; being unaware that what they had experienced was a criminal offence; or having reported to the police previously and knowing that the impact on their mental health would be too great. Indeed, in 2022 in England and Wales, more than 99% of rapes reported to police did not end in a conviction. This was sometimes because the victim withdrew due to the lengthy, difficult process; cases took, on average, 817 days to reach court.⁴³ There are, then, very good reasons why many victim-survivors do not report to the police.</p>
Being dissuaded from making a formal complaint, or options not being explained clearly	<p>See examples above in 'Reasons for not reporting'. Acas guidance explicitly states: 'do not tell someone it could be a long and difficult process, or ask them if they're sure they want to go ahead – this could imply you think they should not carry on with the complaint'.⁴⁴</p>
No response given to formal complaint	<p>Stephanie made a formal complaint of unwanted touching and sexualised comments by sending an email detailing what had happened to the executive producer on a production she worked for (after having a phone call with him). She never received a response to her complaint.</p> <p>This is wrong. Acas guidance states that employers should 'keep [complainants] informed' and 'let them know the outcome as soon as there is one'.⁴⁵</p>

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

<p>Not being told what action was taken at the end of the reporting process</p>	<p>Georgie went through a lengthy complaints process, attending multiple meetings about it. However, she was not told what action was taken as a result of her complaint, whether in relation to the man who had harassed her or in relation to wider changes to address the issues raised.</p> <p>At the time of her complaint, in 2018, the relevant guidance stated that information about any disciplinary action taken as a result of a sexual harassment complaint is the personal data of the responding party, and as such should not be shared with the complainant. This issue is being contested by activists and the current guidance from Acas says ‘You should consider on a case-by-case basis whether to tell the person who made the complaint about what disciplinary action, if any, has been taken. You should tell them if you can’.⁴⁶</p> <p>This is clearly inadequate; those who report need to be told what actions have been taken as a result of their complaint. Clearer guidance is needed in order to support employers to feel confident in sharing this information.⁴⁷</p>
<p>Employer failing to take appropriate risk mitigation measures</p>	<p>Olivia, who was a bystander to a colleague’s sexual harassment complaint, became directly involved when she was asked to work with the person accused of harassment following the complaint. This involved working in very close proximity to him on a one-on-one basis for long working hours. She had previously witnessed some of the harassing behaviours and was very uncomfortable about working with him, but felt pressured into doing so by the company.</p> <p>Acas states that, during a sexual harassment complaint, ‘you may need to take steps to protect the person who’s made a sexual harassment complaint as well as other staff’.⁴⁸</p>
<p>No support or advice provided on the process of reporting</p>	<p>Bectu’s Workplace guide to dealing with sexual harassment states that good implementation of a sexual harassment policy requires that ‘people who experience sexual harassment know where they can get advice and support’.</p>

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

<p>Reporting parties being told by HR that no action can be taken unless more people report.</p>	<p>Vanessa and a colleague both eventually filed a formal complaint against their boss (after a lengthy informal process). They were told by HR that no action could be taken unless more people come forward.</p> <p>This is wrong. Acas states that ‘You should not doubt a sexual harassment complaint simply because it happened away from other people or nobody else witnessed it. You must not ignore or cover up a sexual harassment complaint.’</p> <p>Acas also address the issue of ‘he-said, she-said’ situations: ‘In some cases, you may only have the word of the person making the complaint against the word of the person they’re accusing. For example if the incident happened away from other people or nobody saw it. After hearing the evidence from both sides in a fair process, you can still decide the case is valid if you believe the person who made the complaint.’⁴⁹</p>
<p>Reporting parties being told that they had to report individually and could not give evidence to support others’ complaints.</p>	<p>This was Sarah’s experience. This is in direct opposition to the point above (and occurred in a different workplace). It suggests that there may be poor quality investigations occurring, on several counts:</p> <p>a. The Acas guide to Conducting Workplace Investigations states that sources of evidence to be collected include witness statements.⁵⁰ These should be included where they help to establish the facts of the case, on the balance of probabilities. It is therefore good practice to interview witnesses where they have relevant information; this does not mean interviewing all witnesses to an incident, but enough witnesses should be interviewed to be able to firmly establish what happened.</p> <p>b. In addition, Acas advise that employers should have a collective grievance process that enables grievances to be raised ‘on behalf of two or more employees by a representative of a recognised trade union or other appropriate workplace representative’.⁵¹ However, existing guidance does not address situations where multiple people are making complaints about the same accused party, without knowing about each other’s complaints.</p> <p>Furthermore, there is evidence that sexual violence and harassment are likely to be serial behaviours, rather than one-off. Employers should therefore take into account in their reporting and disciplinary processes the likelihood that multiple people have been targeted. This issue is also under discussion in higher education.⁵²</p>

ENDNOTES

- 1 Bright Purpose (2022). The Whole Picture Programme Evaluation. Final Report. <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Whole-Picture-Programme-Evaluation-Final-Report-v3.0.pdf>; Wallis, R., Van Raalte, C., & Pekalski, D. (2021). State of Play 2021: Management Practices in UK Unscripted Television. Bournemouth University, Bectu. <https://members.bectu.org.uk/advice-resources/library/2974>; TV and Film Charity (2023). Mental Health in the Film and TV Industry Three years on. https://25788730.fs1.hubspotusercontent-eu1.net/hubfs/25788730/Looking%20Glass%2022_FINAL.pdf?utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Ffilmtvcharity.org.uk%2F; Wilkes, M., Florisson, R., & Carey, H. (2020). The Looking Glass: Mental health in the UK film, TV and cinema industry. The Film and TV Charity. <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Looking-Glass-Final-Report-Final.pdf>
- 2 Wilkes, M., Florisson, R. & Carey, H. (2020). The Looking Glass. P.19
- 3 Film and TV Charity (2022). Mental Health in the Film and TV Industry after Covid. https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/LookingGlassReport_2021_Final.pdf?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=Social-Organic&utm_campaign=Looking-glass-21-Report p.11
- 4 Creative Diversity Network (2023). Diamond The Sixth Cut 2021-22. <https://creativitynetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Diamond-The-6th-Cut-July2023.pdf>. P.11; BFI Statistical Yearbook 2021. <https://core-cms.bfi.org.uk/media/24979/download.%20>. P.195. Directors UK (2018). Who's Calling the Shots? Gender Inequality among Screen Directors Working in UK Television. <https://directors.uk.com/campaigns/gender-equality-in-uk-tv>; Ofcom (2022). Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in TV and Radio. https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/246854/2021-22-report-diversity-in-tv-and-radio.pdf.
- 5 Film and TV Charity (2022). Mental Health in the Film and TV Industry after Covid, p.12.
- 6 Bright Purpose. (2022). The Whole Picture Programme Evaluation. Final Report, p.17.
- 7 A workplace guide to dealing with sexual harassment (2018). Prospect & Bectu. <https://library.prospect.org.uk/download/2018/01069> ; BFI (2017). Practical workplace guide for the prevention of bullying, harassment and racism in the screen industries; The Fawcett Society, Time's Up and Rosa, Tackling Sexual Harassment in the Workplace <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/tackling-sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace>; The Film and TV Charity, Support for Employers <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/your-support/support-for-employers/> ; The Film and TV Charity Listen, Acknowledge, Act. <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/your-support/support-for-employers/listen-acknowledge-act/>
- 8 The call for interviewees also explained that: 'Sexual harassment can be overt – for example, sexualised comments, unwanted touching, or unwanted sexual approaches (including assault). But it can also take more subtle forms, such as someone sharing details of their sex life or asking intrusive questions. It might be an experience at work where

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

something just felt weird and wrong, and you couldn't put your finger on why. Or, you might have noticed people at work behaving like this towards others. Witnessing these behaviours might have affected your own experience of the workplace – perhaps you feel intimidated or unsafe at work as a result.'

9 Equality and Human Rights commission (2020). Sexual harassment and harassment at work: Technical guidance. Equality and Human Rights Commission. <https://equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/sexual-harassment-and-harassment-work-technical-guidance>.

10 Under the 2003 Sexual Offences Act, indecent exposure is a criminal offence if a person (a) intentionally exposes his genitals, and (b) intends that someone will see them and be caused alarm or distress. See: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/section/66>.

11 Information about the study and invitations to participate were, as noted above, disseminated via groups representing marginalised workers in film and TV, including trans and racially minoritized workers. Participants were offered the opportunity to be interviewed by a trans interviewer or a woman of colour. Recruitment was also prioritised via organisations representing people of colour and trans people in the industry. However, a longer-term relationship of trust is likely to be needed to elicit the participation of more people from marginalised identities within the industry in research.

12 UK Government (2019, 4 March). New legal measures to protect workers from misuse of non-disclosure agreements. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-legal-measures-to-protect-workers-from-misuse-of-non-disclosure-agreements>.

13 Campaign group Can't Buy My Silence encourage employers to pledge not to use NDAs in bullying and harassment cases. The issue of NDAs being used in media outlets has also been discussed in parliament: <https://www.cantbuymysilence.com/non-disclosure-agreements-at-media-outlets-like-itn-allow-toxic-environments-and-harassment-to-fester-senior-mp-says>.

14 Kelly, L. (1988). *Surviving Sexual Violence*. Polity Press, p.74, 91.

15 See: <https://www.acas.org.uk/how-to-raise-a-problem-at-work>. While informal approaches may sometimes be appropriate for low-level behaviours that are not part of a pattern, this guidance also suggests mediation as a step for resolving problems at an informal level. For sexual harassment and violence, mediation should not be used as it may put the reporting party at further risk, and does not recognise the seriousness of these behaviours.

Interviewees were not always sure whether they had reported formally or informally, sometimes because they did not appear to have been told this information. As a result, where there was evidence of an investigation being opened up, a written response to a report, or an ongoing process that the interviewee was involved in, this has been designated as a formal reporting process.

16 'Rape myths' are so prevalent that the Crown Prosecution Service have issued guidance to try and avoid their use in criminal trials. This guidance is also helpful for recognising and contradicting such myths: The Crown Prosecution Service (2021, May 21). Rape and Sexual Offences—Annex A: Tackling Rape Myths and Stereotypes. <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/rape-and-sexual-offences-annex-tackling-rape-myths-and-stereotypes>.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

- 17 BFI (2017). Practical workplace guide for the prevention of bullying, harassment and racism in the screen industries <https://www.bfi.org.uk/inclusion-film-industry/bullying-harassment-racism-prevention-screen-industries/guidance>.
- 18 EHRC (2017). Sexual Harassment and the Law. Guidance for Employers. London: Equality and Human Rights Commission. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/sexual-harassment-and-the-law-guidance-for-employers.pdf>.
- 19 Out of the 18 interviewees, 22 incidents of sexual harassment/violence were described in detail (and many others referred to in passing). These 22 incidents are the ones discussed here. Two interviewees were from the same workplace and described the same situation, from different perspectives. One interviewee disclosed the same issue twice, in two different workplaces (where the person responsible turned up on another job she was on). Three interviewees were bystanders or supporters of someone else making a complaint. The numbers in the discussion in this section therefore do not necessarily add up to 18.
- 20 Wilkes, M., Florisson, R., & Carey, H. (2020). The Looking Glass P.19.
- 21 Manne K (2017). Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, p. 197, 201.
- 22 Sørensen, I. E. (2022). Sex and safety on set: Intimacy coordinators in television drama and film in the VOD and post-Weinstein era. *Feminist Media Studies*, 22(6), 1395–1410. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2021.1886141>.
- 23 BFI (2018). A practical workplace guide for the prevention of bullying, harassment and racism in the screen industries. <https://www.bfi.org.uk/inclusion-film-industry/bullying-harassment-racism-prevention-screen-industries/guidance>.
- 24 Longley, M. (2021). '6ft From The Spotlight and The Wellbeing Facilitator'. Cinemamas. <https://www.cinemamas.co.uk/blog/6ft-from-the-spotlight-and-the-wellbeing-facilitator>.
- 25 Bright Purpose (2022). The Whole Picture Programme Evaluation. Final Report. p.25.
- 26 See for example: Abdul, G. (2023, 15 April). 'CBI president apologises over sexual misconduct allegations'. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2023/apr/15/cbi-president-apologises-over-sexual-misconduct-allegations>.
- 27 See also the Screen Industries Growth Network's briefing Organising Inclusive Events in the Games Industry. Available at: <https://screen-network.org.uk/publication/organising-inclusive-informal-events-in-the-games-industry/>
- 28 Equality and Human Rights Commission (2017). Sexual Harassment and the Law: Guidance for Employers. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/sexual-harassment-and-the-law-guidance-for-employers.pdf>.
- 29 Wilkes, M., Florisson, R. & Carey, H. (2020). The Looking Glass: Mental health in the UK film, TV and cinema industry. The Film and TV Charity. <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Looking-Glass-Final-Report-Final.pdf> p.33-34.
- 30 The Film and TV Charity (2023). Listen, Acknowledge, Act! <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/your-support/support-for-employers/listen-acknowledge-act/>

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

- 31 Ofcom (2022). Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Guidance for Broadcasters. https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/147710/diversity-in-broadcasting-guidance.pdf. P. 10.
- 32 Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority. (2023, September 29). The Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority to go live in 2024. <https://ciisa.org.uk/uncategorized/the-creative-industries-independent-standards-authority-to-go-live-in-2024/>
- 33 <https://members.bectu.org.uk/advice-resources/library/3155>
- 34 For further information and to enquire about availability see: <https://members.bifa.film/form/bifa-edi-training-expression-of-interest>
- 35 <https://www.screenskills.com/bookings/bullying-harassment-training/e751092c-91a7-4d22-8e5b-575467c66fc3/>
- 36 The Film and TV Charity (2023). 'Listen, Acknowledge, Act'. <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/your-support/support-for-employers/listen-acknowledge-act/>
- 37 For example, the Call It! app allows people to report each day on their experiences of their workplace and allows anonymised trends to be viewed.
- 38 Office of Student Conduct, Complaints & Appeals (OSCCA). (2021). 2020-21 Annual Report. University of Cambridge. https://www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/2020-21_oscca_annual_report.pdf pages 17-20.
- 39 Kaiser, J. (2021). 'More than 70 Lab Heads Removed from NIH Grants after Harassment Findings'. Science. <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2021/06/nih-removed-more-70-lab-heads-grants-after-harassment-complaints>.
- 40 Acas (2020). Discipline and Grievances at Work: The Acas Guide. <https://www.acas.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-04/discipline-and-grievances-at-work-the-acas-guide.pdf>
- 41 Abbey, A., Zawacki, T., Buck, P. O., Clinton, A. M., & McAuslan, P. (2001). Alcohol and Sexual Assault. Alcohol Research & Health, 25(1), 43–51. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4484576/>.
- 42 Equality and Human Rights commission (2020). Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work: Technical Guidance. Equality and Human Rights Commission. <https://equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/sexual-harassment-and-harassment-work-technical-guidance>. P.24.
- 43 Hohl, K. (2022). New scorecards show under 1% of reported rapes lead to conviction. City, University of London. <https://www.city.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/2022/04/new-scorecards-show-under-1-of-reported-rapes-lead-to-conviction-criminologist-explains-why-englands-justice-system-continues-to-fail>.
- 44 Acas (2021). Handling a sexual harassment complaint. <https://www.acas.org.uk/sexual-harassment/handling-a-sexual-harassment-complaint>'.
- 45 Acas (2021). Handling a sexual harassment complaint. <https://www.acas.org.uk/sexual-harassment/handling-a-sexual-harassment-complaint>'.
- 46 Acas (2021). Handling a sexual harassment complaint. <https://www.acas.org.uk/sexual-harassment/handling-a-sexual-harassment-complaint>'.

SAFE TO SPEAK UP?

sexual-harassment/handling-a-sexual-harassment-complaint’.

47 See recommendations in: Bull, A., and Shannon, E. (2023). Higher Education After #MeToo: Institutional Responses to Reports of Gender-Based Violence and Harassment. The 1752 Group/University of York. <https://1752group.com/higher-education-after-metoo/>.

48 Acas (2021). Handling a sexual harassment complaint. <https://www.acas.org.uk/sexual-harassment/handling-a-sexual-harassment-complaint>.

49 Acas (2021). Handling a sexual harassment complaint. <https://www.acas.org.uk/sexual-harassment/handling-a-sexual-harassment-complaint>.

50 Acas (2019). Conducting workplace investigations. <https://www.acas.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/conducting-workplace-investigations.pdf>.

51 Acas (2015). Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures. <https://www.acas.org.uk/acas-code-of-practice-for-disciplinary-and-grievance-procedures/html>.

52 Bull, A., and Shannon, E. (2023). Higher Education After #MeToo: Institutional Responses to Reports of Gender-Based Violence and Harassment. The 1752 Group/University of York. <https://1752group.com/higher-education-after-metoo/> .45.

sign


Screen Industries Growth Network

64

screen-network.org.uk

 [Twitter](#)

 [LinkedIn](#)

 [YouTube](#)

