

# Gender Inequality

## What Gender Inequality Looks Like in FE/HE

### Attainment Gaps

Women and non-binary students face disparities in certain subjects, especially STEM.

### Harassment & Safety Issues

Marginalised genders experience higher rates of harassment, microaggressions, and feeling unsafe on campus.

### Limited Representation

Few role models or mentors reduce confidence and sense of belonging.

### Bias in Classroom Dynamics

Gender-diverse students are interrupted, overlooked, or judged more harshly in class.

### Career Pipeline Inequality

Barriers limit access to research roles, placements, and leadership pathways.

## Why It matters

Inequality **reduces retention, academic confidence, and sense of belonging.**

Diverse learning environments **improve innovation, collaboration, and overall attainment** across the student body.

Universities have **legal duties** (e.g., Equality Act 2010 in the UK) to reduce discrimination and promote inclusion.

## Steps to Take

### Create Safer, More Inclusive Learning Spaces

- Train staff in inclusive teaching and bias reduction
- Challenge gendered assumptions in classes and group work
- Use lecture content featuring diverse scholars

### Strengthen Support Systems

- Provide confidential, trauma-informed reporting routes
- Implement clear gender-inclusive policies
- Offer accessible well-being and mental-health support

### Close Attainment & Career Gaps

- Offer targeted scholarships, internships, and placements
- Provide workshops on leadership, confidence, and negotiation
- Collect and share gender-disaggregated attainment data

### Improve Representation & Role Modelling

- Recruit and promote women and gender-diverse staff
- Create mentoring schemes with diverse professionals

## Empowering Students

Join or form women's networks, LGBTQ+ societies, or advocacy groups.

Access peer mentoring or study support groups.

Participate in student voice panels shaping equality policy.

Report incidents without fear using anonymous or confidential systems.

## What Students Say They Need

**Fair and visible** reporting systems for harassment.

**Safe, inclusive classrooms** with respect for pronouns and identities.

**More female and gender-diverse lecturers, mentors, and advisors.**

**Scholarships and funding** targeted at under-represented genders in STEM, leadership, and research.

**Opportunities** for peer networks and identity-based societies.



1.1.3 Develops learning relationships based on mutual respect and integrity.



#EqualityMatters

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