



Criminal Behaviours

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Sexual assault, rape, stalking, and indecent exposure are criminal offences in all States and Territories in Australia.

Sexual assault includes acts of a sexual nature carried out against a person's will (e.g., a woman is forced to have sex after a club function or to maintain her position on the team). Sexual assault is a criminal matter and is dealt with by the police.

Click here to go to the [Sexual Harassment Interactive Scenario](#).

Sometimes these behaviours are confused with sexual harassment, which is not a criminal offence. However, serious sexual harassment can include one or more of these behaviours, and as criminal behaviours they should be dealt with by the police.

Most sexual assault is perpetrated by men against women. Violence against women in sport should not be tolerated. Sports - at all levels- needs to shift attitudes and have structures in place that recognise that violence against women and behaviour that harms or degrades women is never acceptable.

Physical assault involves the use of physical force with the intent to harm or frighten. Assault is a criminal matter and is dealt with by the police. Sports usually use their tribunal or hearing committees to deal with incidents that involve physical contact between players during an event or game

(e.g., a melee or punch up between the players). These processes may also deal with off-field incidents (e.g., a fight in the club rooms), although this will vary from sport to sport. A victim of assault may elect to report it to the police.

For an example see the **AFL Respect and responsibility policy**.