

SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

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Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology
(Deemed to be University)

Rajiv Gandhi Salai, Chennai – 600119, Tamil Nadu, India

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DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

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DOCUMENT CLASSIFICATION : This document constitutes an official policy of the Deemed to be University. The provisions of this policy shall be implemented and interpreted in accordance with the applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, and in conjunction with other relevant policies, regulations, ordinances, and guidelines of the Institution.



SATHYABAMA

INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

CATEGORY - 1 UNIVERSITY BY UGC

Accredited with 'A++' grade by NAAC | Approved by AICTE

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology is committed to providing a safe, secure, and dignified learning and working environment for all its students, research scholars, faculty, and non-teaching staff. The Institute upholds the fundamental right to equality and dignity as enshrined in the Constitution of India.

This policy is formulated in accordance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (hereinafter referred to as the "POSH Act") and the University Grants Commission (Prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions) Regulations, 2015. (hereinafter referred to as the "UGC Regulations, 2015").

The Institute adopts a ZERO TOLERANCE policy towards sexual harassment and is dedicated to the prevention, prohibition, and redressal of sexual harassment on its campuses.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology shall ensure that no student, employee, or visitor is subjected to sexual harassment. The Institute is committed to:

- a) To foster an environment free from gender-based discrimination and violence.
- b) To promote gender sensitization through awareness and training programmes.
- c) To provide a robust and accessible grievance redressal mechanism.
- d) To ensure fair, time-bound, and confidential inquiry into complaints.

3. OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of this policy are:

1. To prevent and prohibit sexual harassment of women employees and students in accordance with applicable law.
2. To create a secure physical and social environment to deter acts of sexual harassment.
3. To promote a social and psychological environment that raises awareness about sexual harassment in its various forms.
4. To provide a mechanism for the registration and redressal of complaints.
5. To recommend punitive action against the guilty.

4. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy shall be applicable in accordance with Regulation 3 of the UGC Regulations, 2015:

- Students: Regular, online /ODL students.
- Employees: Faculty, administrative staff, technical staff, research staff, contract employees, daily wagers, and trainees.

Jurisdiction: The policy is applicable to:

- Any location within the Institute campus.
- Any external location visited by a student or employee arising out of or during the course of employment or study (e.g., field trips, internships, academic conferences).
- Institute-provided transportation.
- Online platforms and digital spaces used for academic or professional communication.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 SEXUAL HARASSMENT

"Sexual Harassment" includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behavior (whether directly or by implication):

- Physical contact and advances;
- A demand or request for sexual favors;
- Making sexually colored remarks;
- Showing pornography;
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

Note: The following circumstances, among others, if it occurs or is present in relation to or connected with any act or behavior of sexual harassment may amount to sexual harassment:

- Implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment or education.
- Implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment.
- Implied or explicit threat about present or future employment/education status.
- Interference with work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work/learning environment.
- Humiliating treatment likely to affect health or safety.

5.2 AGGRIEVED PERSON

In relation to a workplace, a woman, of any age whether employed or not, who alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment by the respondent.

5.3 RESPONDENT

A person against whom the aggrieved person has made a complaint.

5.4 WORKPLACE

Includes any department, organization, undertaking, establishment, enterprise, institution, office, branch, or unit which is established, owned, controlled or wholly or substantially financed by funds provided directly or indirectly by the appropriate Government or the local authority or a Government company or a corporation or a co-operative society.

6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is grounded in the following legal instruments:

1. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act).
2. UGC (Prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions) Regulations, 2015.
3. Constitutional Provisions: Article 14 (Right to Equality), Article 15 (Prohibition of discrimination), and Article 21 (Right to Life and Personal Liberty).
4. Vishakha Guidelines as laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

7. INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (ICC)

The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) is constituted in accordance with Regulation 4 of the UGC Regulations, 2015.

Role	Designation/Criteria
Presiding Officer	A woman faculty member employed at a senior level (Professor/Associate Professor).
Faculty Members	Two faculty members committed to the cause of women or who have had experience in social work or have legal knowledge.
Non-Teaching Members	Two non-teaching employees committed to the cause of women or who have had experience in social work or have legal knowledge.
Student Representatives	Student representatives shall be included where the matter involves students, in accordance with UGC norms.
External Member	One member from an NGO or association committed to the cause of women or a person familiar with issues relating to sexual harassment.

- At least fifty percent (50%) of the members of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) shall be women.
- The Chairperson and members of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) shall hold office for a period not exceeding three years from the date of their nomination.

8. COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

8.1 FILING A COMPLAINT

An aggrieved person may make, in writing, a complaint of sexual harassment to the ICC within three months from the date of the incident. In case of a series of incidents, within a period of three months from the date of the last incident.

- The complaint should be submitted to the Presiding Officer or any member of the ICC.
- If the aggrieved person is unable to make a complaint in writing, the Presiding Officer or any member of the ICC shall render all reasonable assistance to making the complaint in writing.
- The complaint may also be submitted through official email to the ICC aticc@sathyabama.ac.in
- The aggrieved person may submit the complaint through the designated online complaint link Internal Complaint Committee | Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology (Deemed to be University) provided by the institution website

8.2 COMPLAINT FORMAT

The complaint should contain:

- Description of the incident(s).
- Date(s), time(s), and location(s).
- Name of the respondent(s).
- Names of witnesses, if any.
- Supporting documents or evidence, if available

The time limit may be extended by the ICC for reasons recorded in writing, as per the provisions of the POSH Act.

9. INQUIRY PROCESS

1. Inquiry: The ICC shall conduct an inquiry in accordance with the principles of natural justice. Both parties will be given an opportunity to be heard.
2. Confidentiality: The identity of the aggrieved party, respondent, witnesses, and details of the inquiry will be kept confidential.
3. Interim Relief: During the pendency of the inquiry, the ICC may recommend:
 1. Transfer of the aggrieved person or the respondent.
 2. Granting leave to the aggrieved person (up to 3 months).
 3. Restraining the respondent from reporting on the work performance of the aggrieved person.

The inquiry shall be completed within a period of 90 days from the date of receipt of the complaint, as per statutory provisions

10. ACTION

If the allegation constitutes sexual harassment, the ICC will recommend action to the Competent Authority of the Institution

10.1 FOR EMPLOYEES

Penalties may include:

- Written apology.
- Warning, reprimand, or censure.
- Withholding of promotion or pay rise.
- Termination of service.
- Counseling or community service.

10.2 FOR STUDENTS

Penalties may include:

- Warning or reprimand.
- Withholding privileges (library, hostel, scholarships).
- Suspension or expulsion from the Institute.
- Bar on appearing for examinations.
- Reformatory punishments like mandatory counseling.

11. PROTECTION MEASURES

- **Non-Retaliation:** The Institute strictly prohibits retaliation against any person who files a complaint or participates in an inquiry. Retaliation constitutes a separate disciplinary offense.
- **Confidentiality:** Breach of confidentiality regarding the complaint or inquiry proceedings by any person (including witnesses or ICC members) will attract disciplinary action.
- **False Complaints:** If the ICC concludes that the allegation was malicious or the aggrieved person produced forged documents, it may recommend action against the complainant. However, a mere inability to substantiate a complaint or lack of sufficient proof will not be treated as a malicious complaint.

12. AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology shall take the following measures:

- Conduct regular orientation programs for new students and employees explaining the policy.
- Organize workshops and seminars on gender sensitization.
- Display penal consequences of sexual harassment at conspicuous places.
- Ensure the policy is available on the Institute's website.

13. MONITORING AND REPORTING

The ICC shall submit an Annual Report to the Institute authorities and the UGC comprising:

- Number of complaints received.
- Number of complaints disposed of.
- Number of cases pending for more than 90 days.
- Nature of action taken.
- Number of awareness programs conducted.
- The Institute shall include information about the number of cases filed and their disposal in its Annual Report.

The annual report shall be submitted to the UGC in accordance with regulation 14 of the UGC regulations, 2015.

14. MISCELLANEOUS

14.1 APPEALS

Any person aggrieved by the recommendations of the ICC or non-implementation of such recommendations may prefer an appeal to the appropriate authority or court, as per the provisions of the POSH Act, 2013, within 90 days of the recommendations.

14.2 AMENDMENTS

The Institute reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time to comply with new laws or regulations issued by the Government of India or UGC.

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